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ABSTRACT

This monograph discusses Thomas Greenfield's writings and those of his two major detractors, Daniel Griffiths and Donald J. Willower. For nearly a decade Greenfield has attacked traditional theories of educational administration and argued for the centrality of mind in the construction of organizational and administrative reality. An introductory essay discloses the mode of reasoning evident in Greenfield's discourse by identifying ways in which disputation reveals a mental universe, also evident in the works of Griffiths and Willower. In three readings, Greenfield expresses doubts about what he sees as the ill-conceived nature of educational administration. He contends that placing meaning and intention upon experience shapes what we call organizations and that this process should be the focus of organizational theory. Griffith's reactions to Greenfield's doubts are to criticize organizational theories that pertain to educational administration and to offer suggestions that clarify concepts and restrict theories. Willower responds by exploring philosophical issues surrounding theory in educational administration, questioning its "raison d'etre" as a field of academic endeavor. Analysis of Greenfield and his critics demonstrates how theorizing in educational administration exposes differences about educational administration. Each reading provides a list of references or endnotes; an annotated bibliography is included. (CJH)

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ESA 841 THEORY AND PRACTICE IN EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION

Rethinking Educational Administration

T.B. Greenfield and his Critics

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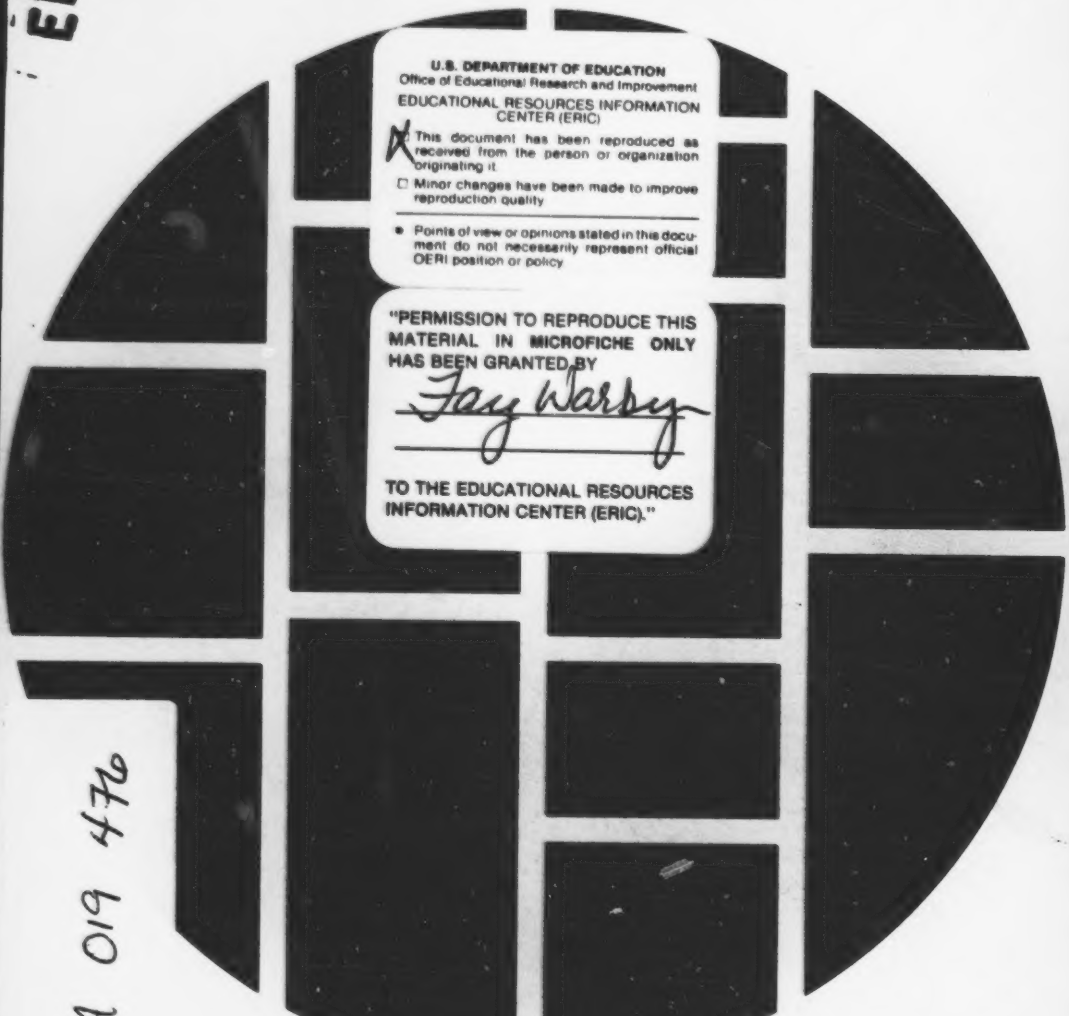

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Peter Gronn

ESA841 Theory and practice in educational administration

Rethinking educational administration: T.B. Greenfield and his critics

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Series Introduction

It is now widely recognised, among theorists and practitioners alike, that the traditions that have informed educational administration as a field of study for several decades are of only limited use in coming to terms with the complexity and value-laden nature of educational practice. The sudden politicisation of the context and conduct of education has raised issues of immediate import that cannot be dealt with adequately by functionalist analysis or behavioural science. The collapse of these theoretical traditions in educational administration has produced a vacuum into which a very haphazard collection of intellectual bric-a-brac has been sucked. As a result, both theorists and the practitioners who look to them for help in an increasingly disordered world are alike in their bewilderment. How can alternative formulations be developed? How can reliable and relevant analyses be made?

The series of books of which this volume is a part is an attempt to explore a variety of intellectual traditions that have, until now, been largely ignored or dismissed by educational administrators. Each of the books is an attempt to bring a particular intellectual perspective to bear on the practical problems of administering education. They are, therefore, diverse in their starting points and in their analysis. What they have in common, however, is a rejection of a purely technical, functionalist approach to educational administration, and a commitment to a critical and reflexive consideration of educational practice.

The ideas presented in the introductory essays are necessarily an encapsulation of arguments which have developed and are developing more fully elsewhere. In order to assist readers to participate in these developments, selected readings are attached to each paper, and an annotated bibliography of key works is provided. We hope that the publication of this series will encourage others to join a necessary exploration of alternative perspectives in educational administration. Such exploration is long overdue.

Course team chairman

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Rethinking educational administration: T.B. Greenfield and his critics

> I am coming not to know what educational administration is and to doubt that it ought to continue an existence as an independent field of inquiry. In its place, I am beginning to believe in basic studies in the humanities and the consideration of the existential realities experienced by those who wield power in schools and by those who suffer its application.
>
> Greenfield 1979–80, p. 238

Introduction

For nearly a decade T.B. Greenfield has attacked traditional theories of educational administration and urged arguments upon his readers about the centrality of mind in the construction of organisational and administrative reality. As might be expected, he has been pronounced deviant, and the paradigm shift he advocates has been resisted by established figures in the field. This monograph discusses the corpus of his writings, and those of his two major detractors, D.E. Griffiths and D.J. Willower. An initial outline is given of those who have made a contribution to this dispute within the field of educational administration. Attention is then devoted to Greenfield's doubts about what he sees as the ill-conceived and ill-informed nature of the field. A discussion of Griffiths's and Willower's reactions to these doubts follows. The conclusion of the monograph addresses a series of questions about the *raison d'être* and viability of educational administration as a field of academic endeavour.

Overview

In addition to 12 articles and papers by Greenfield (1973, 1975, 1976, 1977–78, 1978, 1979a, 1979b, 1979c, 1979–80, 1980, 1981, 1982), a further 30 publications have some bearing on the issues he has raised. That makes a total of 42 in all. Of the 30, five (Hodgkinson 1978a, 1978b, 1981; Bates 1980, 1981) are broadly sympathetic to Greenfield, another 13 (Kendall and Byrne 1978; Silver 1977; Hills 1980; Griffiths 1975, 1976, 1977, 1978, 1979a, 1979b; Willower 1979a, 1979b, 1980, 1981) express varying degrees of antipathy or disdain, whilst a further 12 (Crane and Walker 1975; Walker 1978; Hills 1977; Gibson 1977, 1979; Riffel 1979; Deblois 1979; Erickson 1979; Silver 1980–81; Boyan 1981; Perrow 1978; March 1978) are marginal, but relevant, nonetheless, to what Greenfield has written. One dissertation has discussed Greenfield's early argument with Griffiths (Herda 1978). These details are summarised below in Figure 1.

There were, in addition, at the time of writing, four other relevant items (Hughes 1976; Ribbens, Best and Jarvis 1977; Tipton 1977; Layton 1977) known to exist, but unavailable to, and unsighted by, this writer.

Figure 1 A decade of debate in educational administration

The core

Protagonists			**Antagonists**		
Greenfield (1973)					
[Greenfield (1974) IIP address, Bristol]					
Greenfield (1975) Revision of (1974)			Griffiths (1975)		
Greenfield (1976)			Griffiths (1976)		
Greenfield (1977–78)			Griffiths (1977)	Silver (1977)	
Greenfield (1978)	Hodgkinson (1978a)		Griffiths (1978)	Kendall and Byrne (1978)	
	Hodgkinson (1978b)				
Greenfield (1979a)			Griffiths (1979a)		Willower (1979a)
Greenfield (1979b)			Griffiths (1979b)		Willower (1979b)
Greenfield (1979c)					
Greenfield (1979–80)					
Greenfield (1980)		Bates (1980)		Hills (1980)	Willower (1980)
Greenfield (1981)	Hodgkinson (1981)	Bates (1981)			Willower (1981)
Greenfield (1982)					

The periphery

Crane and Walker (1975)

Hills (1977) Gibson (1977)
Walker (1978), Perrow (1978), March (1978)

Riffel (1979), Gibson (1979), Deblois (1979),
Erickson (1979)

Silver (1980-81)
Boyan (1981)

An exposition of Greenfield's critique

Greenfield's first criticisms of educational administration were made in 1973, before his 1974 International Intervisitation Program (IIP) address in Bristol (Greenfield 1975), for which he is best known, and in which he re-asserted his early (Greenfield 1973) arguments. Published reactions first appeared in the *UCEA Review* from 1975 to 1977 and in the British Educational Administration Society journal, *Educational Administration*, during the same period. Since 1977 the bulk of the published reactions has appeared in the *Educational Administration Quarterly*. Apart from Riffel's (1979) article there has been scarcely a mention of Greenfield in the *Journal of Educational Administration* until the recent appearance of articles by Willower (1981) and Hodgkinson (1981). Finally, there has been discussion of Greenfield's work in American Educational Research Association papers and at a University Council for Educational Administration seminar at the University of Rochester in 1979. Griffiths was Greenfield's principal antagonist from 1975 to 1979, whilst from 1979 on it has been Willower.

Greenfield's own writings fall into five categories or subdivisions. These are listed in Figure 2.

Figure 2 The corpus of T.B. Greenfield's writings, 1973–82.

1 Initial general critiques of the near total reliance of educational administration on naturalistic (systems) conceptions of organisations (Greenfield 1973, [1974] 1975).

2 Replies to initial criticism expressed in:
  a a **UCEA Review** symposium (Greenfield 1976);
  b a BEAS and a University of Rochester seminar (Greenfield 1977–78, 1978).

3 Two specific critiques:
  a of organisation theory (Greenfield 1979a);
  b of quantitative research methods (Greenfield 1979c).

4 Two surveys:
  a of subjectivist conceptions of organisational reality (Greenfield 1979b);
  b of the 'theory movement' in educational administration, or in his own words 'Whatever happened to Andrew Halpin?' (a founding figure in the movement) (Greenfield 1979–80).

5 A quest for non-rational images of organisational life and non-rational ways of experiencing and knowing (Greenfield 1980, 1981, 1982).

Greenfield as phenomenologist: a misconception

The understanding and assessment of any social theorist's contributions are made difficult by the tags and labels that accrue over time. The terms by which persons define themselves and their alignments can be at odds with the labels others pin on them. Greenfield's case is no exception; it is an exemplary case of how someone seen to be academically deviant is pronounced guilty by intellectual pigeon-holing. Since 1975, Greenfield has carried the label 'phenomenologist'. But it is inappropriate, for three reasons, to see his work as phenomenological. Firstly, Greenfield never cites Edmund Husserl, generally acknowledged as the 'father' of phenomenology. Furthermore, there is only one place in which Greenfield cites Alfred Schutz (Greenfield 1980, p. 49), whom Gorman (1975b, pp. 397, 399) has said 'de-transcendentalized' Husserl in an attempt 'at re-invigorating subjective aspects of phenomenological methodology'. In fact, the two writers most frequently drawn upon by Greenfield are the sociologist Max Weber and the psychiatrist R.D. Laing. The non-functional or *Verstehen* side of Weber's writings, usually known as interpretive or social action theory, is referred to throughout Greenfield's work, while Laing, first cited in 1976, appears in most of the writings from then on. Weber was not a phenomenologist and Laing is normally seen to be an existentialist-cum-Marxist.

The second reason for the disclaimer is that Greenfield himself, although using the term 'phenomenology' in his early papers (especially Greenfield 1975, *passim*, but *not* 1973), disowns the term. In the revision of his 1974 Bristol address, he writes of an 'alternative view' to natural-systems views of organisations in this way:

> [It] stems from nineteenth-century German idealism . . . [and it] bears the awkward name phenomenology . . . though it might with equal justification be called the method of understanding, as it is in the work of Max Weber . . . *What we call the view is not important*. What matters is that there exists a body of theory and assumption which runs squarely at odds with that which has provided the ideological underpinnings of educational administration as it has developed over the past two decades. *The ideological conflict between these views rests on two fundamentally different ways of looking at the world* (Greenfield 1975, pp. 74–5, emphasis added).

There are three points here. Firstly, Greenfield seems to link the method of understanding (*Verstehen*) with phenomenology. He was later to suffer for this apparent indiscretion, because it gave Willower an opportunity to point out that the term ought to be linked with Husserl, not Weber, as well as to expound, in a way Greenfield had not done, for a page and half on the word and its American adherents (Willower, 1979b, pp. 70–1). Perhaps Greenfield realised his confusion for, as Willower (1979b, p. 70) rightly records he did not use the word 'phenomenology' in his 1976 reply. That Greenfield had begun to shy away from the term, ultimately abandoning it, is clear when he wrote after his IIP address:

> My first task in responding to the critics of my [1974] paper is to set at rest the ghost of phenomenology. The paper was not about phenomenology, as American critics have tended to insist it is . . . the tidy-minded have grasped the term, phenomenology, *but not the implications of it* (Greenfield 1977–78, pp. 89, 90, emphasis added).

Herein lies the second point of significance of the quote (Greenfield 1975, p. 74) cited previously: that there is an 'alternative view' but the label itself does not really matter. The third point is the most important one, which is that the last sentence in the quote ('*The ideological conflict* . . .') is the one which assumes greatest significance. What Greenfield wanted, and the reasons will become clearer shortly, was another way 'of looking at the world'. It was this which he wanted to emphasise, namely, another frame, another set of assumptions on which to ground an understanding of reality. Yet those who responded to him initially (and, in the main, negatively) seized upon the word 'phenomenology' and took him to task for that, thus missing the real thrust of his critique.

The third and final reason why his writings are not to be seen as phenomenological is, as has been suggested, his own progressive abandonment of the term. In fact, the words which start to appear in his writings when R.D. Laing begins to be cited are the words 'existential' and 'existential reality'. That is one of the reasons why the quote which heads this monograph was chosen, for those very words appear there.

It can be said in summary that what inspired Greenfield early on was the interpretive or subjective side of Weber's work. In an attempt to come to terms with the 'meaning' of action, he associated this with phenomenology. The reference to 'meaning' remains throughout the entirety of his work. But with the introduction of Laing and the term 'existential', 'meaning' becomes wedded to a dimension of feeling or to a notion of 'being'.

The evolution of Greenfield's thinking

Why is 'the ideological conflict between . . . two fundamentally different ways of looking at the world' (see above, Greenfield 1975, p. 74) so important? These words are very like Berger's (1978) phrase, 'ways of seeing'. In Greenfield's case they are the words of a man who has embarked on an intellectual pilgrimage. That is, they reflect a critical moment, or passage, in the career biography of a theorist who has turned his back on the way in which he was trained to see the intellectual and everyday world.

Before exploring Greenfield's case, it is worth pointing out that he is not alone in his 'skin shedding'. For instance, Weick, editor of the *Administrative Science Quarterly*, and originator of the 'loosely coupled system' metaphor in education, writes:

> [When preparing a lecture in 1973] I reread all the notes only to discover that I actually had serious misgivings about systems theory. I honestly did not realize that this was the case. But since I also believe that sense making is a retrospective process — how can I know what I think till I see what I say — I took this surprising turn of events seriously and fleshed out the argument that systems theory had some drawbacks. The first run-through of the revised argument at SMU [Southern Methodist University] evoked vigorous discussions and I have been working to enrich the argument ever since (Weick 1974, pp. 426–7).

Similarly, in his most recent work Perrow writes:

> Since I am still very much a mainstream theorist, the reader should bear with me in the quite painful process of trying to think oneself out of a paradigm one has lived with, even contributed to. It is difficult to think that one's work on, say, goals or technology, while not wrong in any normal sense, is largely irrelevant in the face of notions that were dimly recognized but put aside (Perrow 1978, p. 107).

Indeed this passage of Perrow's is cited by Griffiths, when making this remark about his own career:

> I approach this task [of discussing recent criticisms of organisational theory] with a certain sadness, because it is not possible to do the job without challenging virtually all of the premises that I have accepted during my career (Griffiths 1979b, p. 44).

None of this, though, for Willower who feels (1979b, p. 63) 'it is a time for a less introspective, more pragmatic approach'.

The allusion to a journey in reference to Greenfield's work is not to indicate where he is ultimately headed, nor to query how he is to get there. Rather, it is to stress where he has *come from*. Sprinkled throughout his work are references to the emergent character of his thinking. Thus, early on he admits:

> I was wrong to let myself believe that the word 'new' belonged either in my address to the IIP 1974 or in the revision of it that appeared in the proceedings of the conference. What was new was not the ideas in the paper, but my awareness of them and the audience to which they were addressed (Greenfield 1978, p. 10).

He further acknowledges that:

> Those who look back over my papers of the last four years or so will not find a line of completely smooth and consistent development, but I would hope that they might note *an evolution of thinking* (Greenfield 1978, p. 11, emphasis added).

Similar sentiments are expressed elsewhere (Greenfield 1978, p. 12; 1979a, p. 110; 1980, p. 56, note 13).

The next point to note is the full significance of Greenfield's use of the first person in most of his work. Writing in this way has two effects. Firstly, it reinforces the emancipatory tone or sense of intellectual liberation which underpins the arguments expressed. Secondly, and most importantly, it points up in an extremely vivid and graphic way how the careers and reputations of educational administration theorists are at stake in this whole debate. This last point requires elaboration. When Greenfield (1977–78, p. 89) writes, 'I have been considering my life and the part organisations play in it [and] it is those reflections I have been writing about', he is not merely personalising a debate but is admitting his doubts in a field in which there has traditionally been little room for, let alone expression of, doubt. If, prior to the 'new movement' in the United States, educational administration 'was [taught] by anecdote . . . by men in their anecdotage' (Greenfield 1979–80, p. 211, citing Halpin), and this was replaced by a system of academic certification and training of administrators, then to admit that the answers offered by the academy no longer suffice is to be seen to engage in intellectual heresy. Educational administration as a field of tertiary study has forged close links with a clientele of both practising and prospective administrators. Bates has summed up this relationship in highly pertinent terms:

> There has often been a tendency for work in educational administration to be simply a laying on of the hands for those who need credentials or a programmatic concern with the maintenance of policies and regulations into which principals and departmental

officers are thought to need socializing (Bates 1980, p. 1).

When people 'break ranks', expressing publicly their private doubts, as Greenfield has done, they are seen to put others at risk, in that academic consultants lose face and clients lose faith. If Greenfield's case is any guide, the response to the apostate is to exclude him[1], to trivialise him[2], or to acknowledge his existence by footnoting him in written accounts but then to proceed, by and large, by ignoring his arguments altogether (e.g. Boyan 1981).

However, the doubts about educational administration do not go away easily. Again, on this point, as with Perrow and Weick, Greenfield is in good company. His fellow Canadian, Hodgkinson, writes:

> After much study, many books, and much weariness of the flesh it does not seem over-provocative to declare that when it comes to administrative and organization theory we have too little of the former and too much of the latter. And with both, the term theory is more honorific than scientific. Moreover, while both have provided fulsome employment for academics, including myself, it would be hard to make the case that life, behaviour, and experience in human complex organizations is much more fully understood and enlightened now than it was decades ago (Hodgkinson 1978a, p. 271).

The theorist March has also written:

> Any effort to improve American education by changing its organization or administration must begin with skepticism. Changing education by changing educational administration is like changing the course of the Mississippi by spitting into the Allegheny (March 1978, p. 219).

Nor are doubts about one's work the exclusive monopoly of organisational and administrative theorists (see Nash and Wintrob 1972).

Why did Greenfield break ranks? What did he break ranks from? When interviewed (Macpherson 1981) during a visit to the Education Faculty, Monash University, Australia, Greenfield was asked why he came to doubt what he had been taught. In replying, he first claimed that for a long time he did not doubt, and then gave two reasons. The first was to do with the professional use of knowledge in the province of Ontario, Canada:

> What I began to realise was that the ideas in my head about the way organisations operated did not correspond with the ideas in the heads of the people who were supposed to be transformed. In some sense they were unwilling to be transformed. They were unwilling to accept the way I was taught the world was . . . That dissonance between the picture of the world I had in my mind and the world as other people saw it simply made me acutely aware that much of the theory that I'd been taught was perhaps not right (Macpherson 1981).

The second was to do with his own personal career experiences:

> I saw and experienced conflict in organisations much more acutely than I ever had . . . I was head of a department and the difficulty, the stress of acting on behalf of the organisation, as I felt I was, was not something that any of my previous studies had prepared me for. I was catapulted into a situation in which people were confronting each

> other eyeball to eyeball, as it were — terrible conflict. I'd been taught that conflict was never between people but it was between the structure and the organisation, and so you had, sort of, a few deviant people out there, but the mass of the structure was always behind the administrator in some sense. And what I realised was that when you get forced to the edge of the cliff, as it were, when you're struggling for your life, in some sense, that there's nothing behind you, just yourself (Macpherson 1981).

These extracts provide some evidence of what happens when 'a switch in visual gestalt' (Kuhn 1970, p. 111) takes place. Kuhn (1970, p. 121) suggests that 'though the world does not change with a change of paradigm, the scientist afterwards works in a different world', by which he means (presumably) that the scientist comes to see things differently. In Greenfield's case, what was the world that he once saw like? How does he now see the world?

Themes in Greenfield's writings

Epistemology and organisation

Greenfield's emphasis shifts from an initial and primary focus on ontological matters to a later and current concern with questions of epistemology. Complementary to such concerns is his advocacy of qualitative research methods and his adherence to a highly voluntaristic conception of human agency. Greenfield's epistemology is an extremely relativistic one and the bulk of the criticism directed at him (particularly by Willower), as will be shown, deals with matters of knowledge, validity and truth.

His ontological concerns are evident when in his first two papers he asks: 'What is an organization that it can have such a thing as a goal? . . . How do the goals of individuals bear upon those of the organization — if, indeed, it is appropriate to speak of organizational goals?' (Greenfield 1973, pp. 552–3) and 'Is it organizations which oppress and harass people or is it fallible people who fail to carry out the well-intentioned aims of organizations?' (Greenfield 1975, p. 71). With such questions Greenfield was challenging what he saw and experienced as the taken-for-granted naturalistic (systems theory) view of social and organisational reality. He was a child of the 'new movement' in educational administration, which gave him two things:

> A technique for inquiring into social reality founded in the methods of behavioural science,

and:

> A view of what reality was, a view of what organisations were, a view of what schools were and what was founded in theoretical statements, a theory of systems (Macpherson 1981).

In rejecting any assumptions about the organisation as real, as 'a *thing*' (1973, p. 555, original emphasis), Greenfield was rejecting a view of social phenomena as isomorphic with natural phenomena. In this way he was touching a key point of dispute, central to social theory (see Jarvie 1981 and Bhaskar 1978). Furthermore, by rejecting what he saw as a basic assumption of the new movement, he was refusing to acknowledge the hegemony of an 'academic cartel' (Greenfield 1977–78, p. 81). This refusal was threefold: he was freeing himself from the dominance of natural systems thinking; he was suggesting that the quest for a universalistic knowledge of organisations was impossible; and in particular he was querying what he saw as an explicit master-servant relationship in the attempts by academics to 'improve' schools or to make them more 'efficient' or 'effective' as part of a quest for an organisational or administrative science. (Described elsewhere (Gronn 1982) as 'neo-Tayloristic' thinking.)

As part of this latter relationship he writes:

> The professor supplanted the practitioner as the source of valid knowledge about administration . . . scholars in educational administration have sought to understand how organizations really work and to use this knowledge towards the improvement of educational practice (Greenfield 1975, p. 73).

Now it is on these two latter points (universality and consultancy) that educational administration is particularly vulnerable. If it can be shown that scholars have little or nothing to transmit to practitioners in the form of *usable knowledge*, and if it can be shown that validity and knowledge claims are dubiously grounded, then the very *raison d'étre* of educational administration, and indeed the future of its professoriate, is at risk. On the question of knowledge claims, Greenfield endeavours to argue that the decision as to what counts as knowledge is an essentially arbitrary one. In fact, for him the criterion is Darwinian: what counts is what those who (themselves) count, in turn, decide will count. He arrives at this point in his work (especially Greenfield 1980) by trying to demonstrate that knowledge is socially constructed:

> The process of truth-making in the academic world . . . does not differ materially from what goes into truth-making in the world at large. Truth is what scientists agree on or what the right scientists agree on. It is also what they can get others to believe in (Greenfield 1978, p. 8).

Having already queried whether natural and social reality are one of a piece, he then queries the distinction between science and ideology, a key point of dispute in the sociology of knowledge (Giddens 1979, pp. 165–97; Ricouer 1981, pp. 222–46). On the matter of ideology he suggests:

> My dissatisfaction with much of contemporary organization theory . . . is that people who call themselves social scientists have forgotten the experiential basis of the ideas they use to interpret reality and are now advocates, instead, of a particular vision of reality that holds no greater truth than a number of alternative views (Greenfield 1979a, p. 98).

According to this argument, and contrary to adherents of a naturalistic position, research does not test theory at all, neither validating nor invalidating it (Greenfield 1979c, *passim*). Rather, 'our theories create the facts that are relevant to them, and we can, therefore, only explore truth within a framework that defines what it is' (Greenfield 1980, p. 24). In addition to queries about social and organisational reality (e.g. what is real?), and a series of existential questions (e.g. what is it like to be a member of an organisation? how is it possible to be that way? especially in Greenfield 1979a, pp. 107–9 where this is particularly vivid). Greenfield has raised serious questions about truth claims. On science, and the method of science, he writes:

> It remains to be seen how men may perceive a criterion of truth that lies outside the workings of their minds and how they might express it without coloring and distorting it as they do everything else they perceive. It remains to be seen, as well, whether they would accept such a standard even if they were convinced it existed. Faced with these difficulties and the appalling prospect of a non-human standard for determining the truth of human affairs, I find it both reasonable and humane to assert the impossibility of conceiving empirical facts or generalizing ideas that the human mind had not worked upon in some way . . . For similar reasons, I find it easy to recognize the impracticality of getting all men to agree upon ultimate truths.
> The necessary question, then, for all scientists to face is what objective truth can mean in a world that can be perceived only subjectively . . . [in which] the 'object of reality' and the 'object of knowledge' are essentially distinct and . . . [in which] knowledge is human knowledge created by agents engaged in active inquiry. The impact of the knower can, therefore, never be 'cleansed' from that which is known (Greenfield 1980, pp. 30–1).

Alienation and anarchy

Mention should also be made of Greenfield's 'anarchistic theory of organisation'. The phrase appears in his latest publication (Greenfield 1982). Throughout this and in an immediately prior conference paper (Greenfield 1981), there is a pervasive sense of alienation evident which links with the existentialist flavour already alluded to. It manifests itself at two levels. Firstly, it is there in procedural asides like the following:

> Now is not the time to argue why I believe that the failure of organizational studies can be explained as a misplaced faith in Science. I have argued that point elsewhere. Instead, I have several other things in mind now and would like to explore them with you. That is to say, I have intentions with respect to you and myself. The notion of intentionality as a key to explaining social reality is a theme that will recur throughout this paper. More formally, however, the paper serves four purposes. (Actually, the paper has no purposes, but how social reality is built [*sic*]. In the everyday way of doing things, there is nothing odd about my projecting my purposes upon 'a paper'. Of course, it is I who will talk about my purposes and you who will listen to me, if I do not strain the trained politeness of academic audiences too much in doing so.) So let me state my purposes in talking this afternoon (Greenfield 1981, p. 1).

It is also evident in this remark:

> As someone infected with anarchistic thought, I should stop at this point and possibly leave also. But as we all know, we must go on — for politeness' sake if for no other reason. And for the most part, we do go

> on. What we go on with is life, in all its ambiguity, possibility, promise, apparent victories and defeats, its pleasure and pain (Greenfield 1982, p. 4).

A sense of alienation is to be witnessed at a more substantive level in statements which are tantamount to saying that 'anything goes' as far as coming to terms with the world is concerned. Two examples illustrate the point. The first is about 'anti-leadership':

> I have called the opposing view the anti-leadership position. It is one that recognizes a plurality of values in human society and that denies ultimate legitimacy to any action. What we are left with, therefore, is contention among values or, more accurately, among those who espouse different values. In this view we are all leaders in some degree. We all have legitimacy in the degree to which we act out of our own values and can involve others in them. This view rejects the idea of a simple, unitary value structure as the foundation for any large, complex social order. In this view all social orders are pluralistic and there will always be struggle and contention among those who represent the conflicting values within the structure. Those who represent the contending values are the leaders and they are in all respects human, fallible, self-interested, perverse, dogged, changeable and ephemeral. In social possibility, we are all leaders. Certainly none of us can claim the ultimate right to leadership, to an ontological justification that is denied to others (Greenfield 1981, p. 27).

The second is about anarchism:

> Anarchy does not fit neatly into a box. Neither does reality. This non-fit says it all. We press a few pieces of multi-faceted reality into our minds and live as though we were omniscient gods. That is why we must needs learn to unloosen our minds and let them run freely. If we are to understand what we ourselves and others see as reality, we should follow R.D. Laing's dictum when he says, 'I have made an arrangement with my mind: I let it do anything it wants to.' And that is the nub of anarchism in the study of organizations: while we ourselves are bound, we may yet free our minds (Greenfield 1982, p. 9).

Greenfield, it would seem, has progressively pushed himself further and further out on a limb in an effort to distance himself from, and to expose the nature of, mainstream educational administration thinking. Where does that leave him? Is it correct to say that his work can be slotted into Burrell and Morgan's (1979, pp.21–37) 'interpretive paradigm', or are the sentiments in his later work more in keeping with their 'radical humanist paradigm'?

Greenfield's alternative

If Greenfield has claimed any label at all, it is to be a subjectivist. The identification with this standpoint is ubiquitous in his work (see especially Greenfield 1973, p. 567; 1975, pp. 82-3; 1977–78, pp. 88, 90; 1978, p. 12; 1979a, pp. 102–3; 1979b, pp. 10–11; 1980, pp. 27–8, 30–1, 35). Some sense of his commitment is manifest in the following passage:

> An alternative conception of organizations rests on ideas about experience and notions about how we come to understand what we do and what is happening to us. It recognizes the placing of meaning upon experience as a bedrock upon which human life is built. Some people invent ideas which give shape and meaning to experience; others borrow those ideas to understand themselves. And many have little or no choice as others' ideas are forced upon them in the same way that the air surrounds them. They must breathe the air or suffocate; so must they accept others' ideas, or break through them to a new atmosphere, to other ideas, to a new reality. This context of ideas by which we understand our experience defines organization. In this sense, organization exists whenever people accept sets of ideas as fit and proper guides for their own behaviour and for that of others. That these ideas may be internally inconsistent and that we cannot always predict what will happen when we act in accordance with them does not remove our dependence upon ideas for ordering our experience and for building an understanding of the world around us (Greenfield 1979b, pp. 4–5).

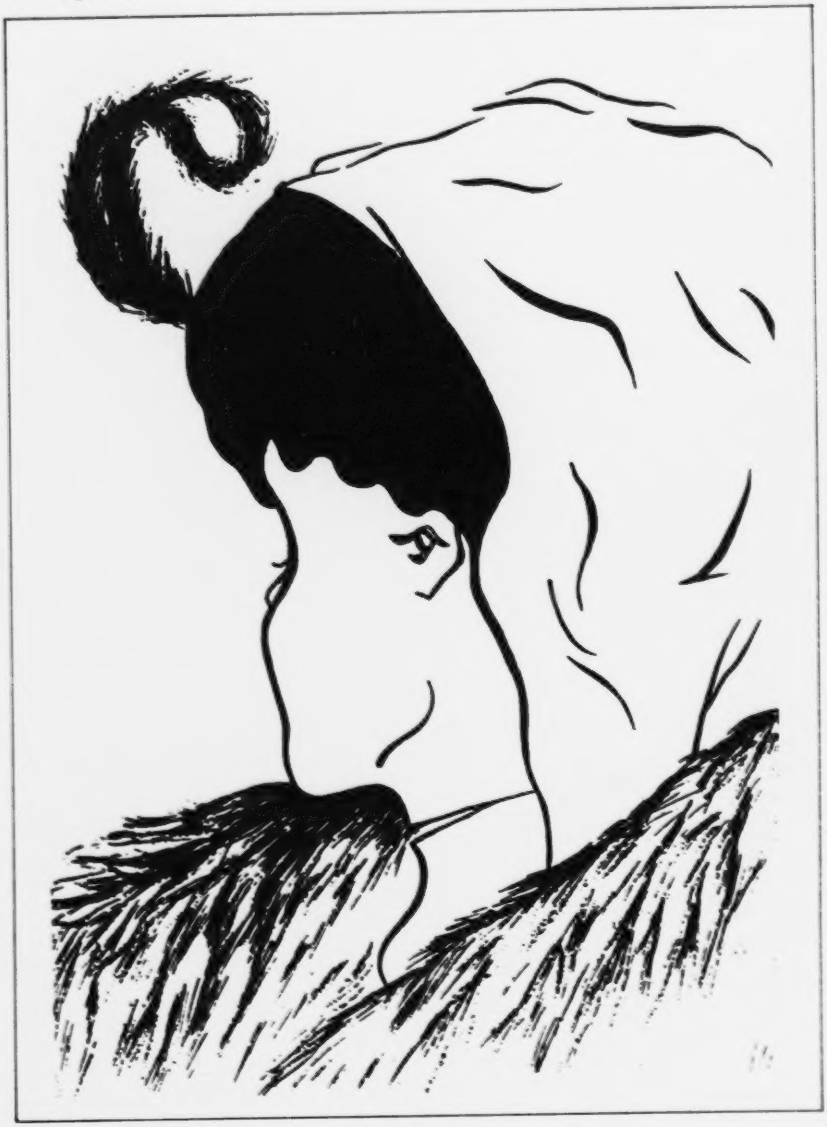
The best way to illustrate this approach to coming to terms with social reality is to stick with the concept of Gestalt-switching, which has been alluded to already in this monograph in the articulation of Greenfield's views. Consider the picture in Figure 3. Suppose a teacher or lecturer with an overhead transparency of this picture asked a class to describe what is disclosed. The image in Figure 3 is ambiguous. The viewer can see either singly (in figure-ground terms) or simultaneously (in configurational terms) a number of persons. In one sense, the precise number of faces disclosed does not matter.[3] The point of the illustration is that *in the very act of arguing* orally in class about the presence or absence of one or more faces, students are, to all intents and purposes, 'negotiating' a definition of the situation. Some will 'see' and others will fail to 'see' — at least at first. An agreement may or may not be arrived at as to what is there. Such an agreement may be consensually or arbitrarily grounded. If the former, then people will probably be persuaded to see what others see. If the latter, then people may be forced to accept what others tell them (that is, there are three, not two, faces evident).

In this example, the act of seeing and talking about what is seen is an act in which people are (literally) *doing their social reality*. Denzin and Keller, in a recent dispute with Goffman (1981), succinctly sum up this conception or way of seeing the social world. They suggest that:

> The joint act . . . is the unit of analysis, and the way the joint acts are assembled, put together, constructed, and build on one another constitutes the interest of the interpretive social scientist. The 'how' of face-to-face behaviour is of central concern, as are the meanings participants bring to, construct, and attach to the activities they find themselves caught up in (Denzin and Keller 1981, p. 53).

Now the particular words in the last quotation from Greenfield, and in the Denzin and Keller citation, on which so much hinges in understanding a 'subjectivist' position are, respectively, 'meaning' and 'meanings'. There are difficulties and problems entailed in the usage of such terms. These are addressed in the discussion which follows.

Figure 3 Figure-ground interplay (McLuhan, Hutchon and McLuhan 1977, p. 11)



Meaningful action

The question of 'meaning' is critical for Greenfield, because he sees it as central to the task of the social scientist. Two points are worthy of note with respect to his discussion of it. The first relates to his own particular usage of the word in his work and the second deals with the role of the social scientist in dealing with questions of meaning.

Greenfield uses 'meaning' in these three ways:

1 mostly in an *a priori* sense as in: 'varying meanings and objectives that individuals bring to the organizations of which they are a part' (Greenfield 1973, p. 559). (See also Greenfield 1975, p. 90; 1976, p. 6; 1979b, p. 6.);

2 occasionally in an *a posteriori* sense as in: ' what meanings and purposes the individual brings to or *takes from* that reality' (Greenfield 1973, p. 556, emphasis added); and

3 early in his work as synonymous with 'theory' as in: 'theory thus becomes the sets of meanings which yield insight and understanding of people's behaviour. These theories are likely to be as diverse as the sets of human meanings and understandings which they are to explain' (Greenfield 1975, p. 83). (See also Greenfield 1976, pp. 7, 8.)

In only one place does he spell out his *a priori* sense of 'meaning', and he does so in ways strikingly reminiscent of the phrase 'ways of seeing' which has been used already in this discussion of his work. He writes:

> What we see depends in large measure on what we believe we are going to see. It may be argued that we see, hear, and feel nothing without first having ideas that give meaning to our experience . . . As aids for understanding, we use larger frameworks and models — theories, if you like — which provide us with reservoirs of ideas for understanding the world around us. These frameworks or models are images of reality, which we carry in our minds and which we use as templates to stamp meaning into [*sic*] the world around us (Greenfield 1979c, p. 173).

Two questions not fully discussed by Greenfield do, however, require answers: What is 'meaning'? For whom is an action meaningful? The first question is important because it was on this very point that Schutz (1980, pp. 3–44) took issue with Weber (Greenfield's oft-cited justificatory source for the determination of meaning). In what is a complex, and at times unwieldy, discussion Schutz sought to demonstrate the potential confusion inherent in Weber's (1947, p. 88) statement, 'the acting individual attaches a subjective meaning to [his action]'. Schutz's discussion is difficult to precis, but it comes down to this: meaning is a constituting process, or a form of sense making, internal to the consciousness of the actor. He writes:

> *Meaning is a certain way of directing one's gaze at an item of one's own experience.* This item is thus 'selected out' and rendered discrete by a reflexive Act. Meaning indicates, therefore, a peculiar attitude on the part of the Ego toward the flow of its own duration (Schutz 1980, p. 42, original emphasis).

This is the subjective meaning of an individual's action. However, the world is a *social* world, in which an individual's actions are open to interpretation by others. This means that 'what we call the world of objective meaning is, therefore, abstracted in the social sphere from the constituting processes of a meaning-endowing consciousness, be this one's own or another's' (Schutz 1980, p. 37). Here, of course, difficulties are immediately encountered. For 'the phenomena of the external world which present themselves to me as indications of the consciousness of other people' (Schutz 1980, p. 37) may be interpreted in highly variant ways by different individuals and such interpretations may (potentially) be at odds with the interpretations of those actors of themselves. The chief problem concerns the validity of those interpretations. Which is the correct or appropriate one, and from whose point of view? This touches on the second difficulty in relation to Greenfield's discussion. It is best illustrated by an example. This example is from Schutz:

> Weber would say that I understand by direct observation the meaning of a man's behaviour when I see him performing such acts as chopping wood, grasping a doorknob in order (N.B.!) to shut the door, or aiming a rifle at an animal. These observed movements of the other person's body Weber cites as the substratum of observational understanding . . . What if the man wielding the ax is not really chopping wood but merely appears to be doing so? What if the man holding the doorknob is not grasping it in order to shut the door but is merely holding it steady in order to repair it? What if the hunter is not taking aim at all but is merely watching the animal through the telescopic sight on his rifle? (Schutz 1980, pp. 26–7)

What would constitute an adequate interpretation of what is observed? Elsewhere Schutz writes of 'the concept of adequacy' in these terms:

> [It] means that each term in such a scientific model of human action must be constructed in such a way that a human act performed within the real world by an individual action as indicated by the typical construct *would be understandable to the actor himself as well as to his fellow-men* in terms of common-sense interpretation of everyday life (Schutz 1962, p. 64, emphasis added).

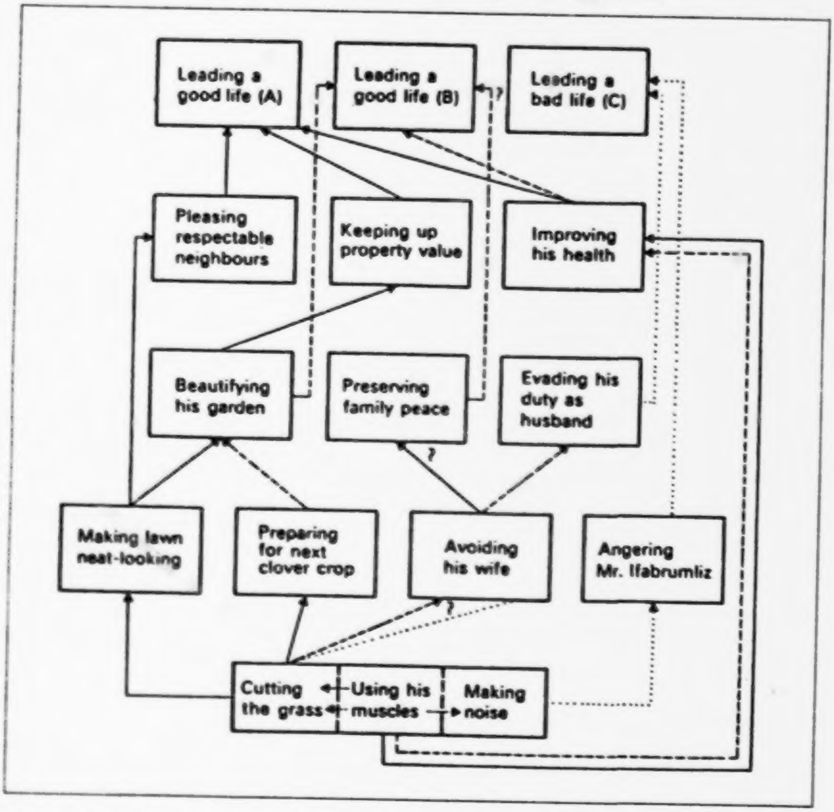
However, as Gorman (1975a, p. 8) points out, meaning adequacy is necessary but not sufficient. The typical constructs ('homunculi') must be causally adequate, which is to say that a repeated example of the observed act will correspond to the construct. Schutz is endeavouring to reconcile the individual actor's freedom to choose or plan his or her own (meaningfully adequate) course of action with patterns of expected conduct or sets of pre-existing typified constructs which inform that action. Gorman (1975a, p. 9) sums up Schutz's dilemma in this way: 'since action is subjectively meaningful and self-determined, Schutz must explain how and why such action manifests itself in impersonal, repeating patterns'.

An illustration of the dilemma is found in a recent, excellent discussion by Menzel (1978). He asks: What was Mr Smith doing behind the lawn mower? Menzel suggests that while Mr Smith is mowing his lawn he is also doing a number of other things:

> he is beautifying his garden;
> he is exercising his muscles;
> he is avoiding his wife;
> he is conforming to the expectations of his neighbours;
> he is keeping up property values in Scarsdale;
> he is angering his new neighbour, Mr Ifabrumliz, who prefers to sleep late, and feels that Smith's mowing is a criticism of his, Ifabrumliz', unkempt lawn (Menzel 1978, p. 147).

Rommetveit (1980, p. 118) has provided a diagrammatic representation of Mr Smith's possible acts. It appears below as Figure 4.

Figure 4 A modified version of Menzel's mystery: What was Mr Smith doing behind the lawn-mower? (Rommetveit 1980, p. 118)


Leading a good life (A)
Leading a good life (B)
Leading a bad life (C)
?
Pleasing respectable neighbours
Keeping up property value
Improving his health
Beautifying his garden
Preserving family peace
Evading his duty as husband
?
Making lawn neat-looking
Preparing for next clover crop
Avoiding his wife
Angering Mr. Ifabrumliz
?
Cutting the grass
Using his muscles
Making noise

Menzel (1978, pp. 148–9) makes five useful points about the multiple-meaning nature of action:

1 More than one meaning may be simultaneously valid;
2 The notion of 'the' meaning of an act, beyond the minimum trivial sense (of, in Smith's case, 'he's mowing the lawn') is fallacious;
3 Interpretations of the meanings of acts will be dictated by the interests determining the inquiry;
4 The crucial meanings of an act may, in some circumstances, be those of the interaction partners, rather than the actor; and
5 A sizeable component of human conduct consists of unintended actions.

In all of these possible interpretations of Mr Smith, he *can be seen to be* acting in the designated ways, quite apart from his own conscious intentions. What surety is there for an observer, indeed a social scientist, that his interpretation corresponds with those intentions? Schutz's (1980, p. 235) answer is: 'of course this person whose subjective experiences we are interpreting may appear to us as more or less determinate depending on how well we know him'. One other recourse is possible, and that is to ask the actor himself. This raises the issue of whose meanings ought to be assigned centrality of place in social-scientific explanations (and in everyday life). Menzel argues emphatically against assigning centrality of place, or priority, to the actor's meanings. Some elucidation of his objections and the link between this part of the discussion and the research into meaning proposed by Greenfield is warranted.

Using the example of Mi-Lai, Menzel (1978, pp. 150–1) asks, who were the actors? Were they US soldiers in Vietnam, or were these men the 'pawns' of bigger decision-makers in Washington? Which of the meanings attributed to each group in respect of the event in question would be the most appropriate? Next, he asks, if these events are termed 'atrocities', which they commonly are, whose label is this? He goes on:

> But if it is 'atrocities' we are researching, and if they do not have the meaning of atrocities to their perpetrators, to whom do they have that meaning? To us. Who is 'us'? It is you, dear reader, and I; it is all the parties to any ongoing dialogue about the formulation of a research problem; it is 'us' the researchers, together with the audiences for whom we write, and the publics whose 'problematic' experiences prompt our investigations (Menzel 1978, p. 153).

In this example, 'atrocities' is a *retrospective* definition or label, employed because it is meaningful to the problem experiencers. He concludes that 'unless we are ready to surrender our right to study phenomena in these terms, we manifestly cannot rely on any "true meaning to actors" as the criterion of choice among such possible interpretations' (Menzel 1978, p. 165).

Menzel's discussion is by no means the final word on the matter of 'meaning'. Nevertheless, it does raise and address some serious (but not insurmountable) problems regarding actors' meanings. Menzel seems to be suggesting that it is *necessary* to come to terms with such meanings, but that this is by no means *sufficient*. However, for Greenfield, it appears that the actors' meanings are both necessary *and* (it would seem from his early writings) sufficient in a social-scientific explanation, as is made clear by the following sample of remarks:

> We must explain behavior in terms meaningful to the actors involved (Greenfield 1973, p. 558).
>
> [The focus of investigation ought to be] whose meanings define what is right to do among people here involved with one another? (Greenfield 1973, p. 571)
>
> The views I am outlining here should make us seek to discover the varying meanings and objectives that individuals bring to the organizations of which they are a part (Greenfield 1975, p. 90; 1976, p. 6).
>
> A knowledge of how people in a social situation construe it, what they see as its significant features, and how they act within it (Greenfield 1975, p. 95).
>
> If the research asks how people in schools view apparently different structures and how they act within them, some light may be shed upon a problemmatic, untidy, but interesting world (Greenfield 1977–78, pp. 97–8).

> Unless there is a close match between the world as researchers construct it and the world as people perceive it and act in it, the researchers' efforts to establish social truths will be a self-contained and ultimately a self-deluding pastime (Greenfield 1978, p. 13).

Having obtained these meanings and definitions Greenfield is not always consistent as to what he does with them. Sometimes he wants to 'interpret', at other times to 'explain', and at others to let the meanings speak for themselves:

> All explanations of social and personal phenomena must rest upon subjective meanings which appear 'adequate' to the individual. The task of those who would explain human action and social forms therefore becomes the 'interpretation' of human meanings (Greenfield 1979b, p. 10).
>
> How we are to understand and appreciate these alternate perspectives as theorists and as human beings is not altogether clear. I have suggested the juxtaposition of meaning-laden, but disparate, images as a method that is both powerful and promising (Greenfield 1979a, p. 109).
>
> I would argue for research that attempts to look at social reality from a variety of perspectives and particularly from the perspective of different actors in a given social situation. In this approach, the researchers become interpreters of social reality, whose task is to explain the human condition to their fellow man (Greenfield 1979c, p. 179).
>
> I would seek to understand the action by working from the perspective of those involved in it and would find explanation only in the juxtaposition of those understandings and in the interpretation of them (Greenfield 1980, p. 35).

What does interpretation entail? Greenfield seems less clear about this, and about where interpretation leads:

> I believe that it is possible to mediate between frames of subjective meaning in somewhat the same way that we translate from one language to another. It *is* done, it *is* accomplished, though it is hard to lay down rules for doing so. The method is that of hermeneutical analysis that demands as perhaps its only unequivocal rule 'a respect for the authenticity of the mediated frames of meaning', that is, respect for other minds and meanings (Greenfield 1980, p. 49, original emphasis).
>
> [The 'facts' of organisational life] rest upon the interpretation and upon the interpretation of interpretations in a process that continues without end and without ever reaching the definitive statement, the final judgement, or the ultimate social truth (Greenfield 1981, p. 9).

His latest thoughts on these matters come in the context of a discussion of Geertz's (1973, Ch. 12) interpretation of Balinese cockfighting. Of Geertz, Greenfield writes:

> How did Geertz come to understand these things? Does he understand them aright? There are no easy answers to these questions. They face anyone who observes and tries to understand any cultural setting. The task of choosing images, metaphors, statements to represent the organization as a cultural artifact is not easy. There are no rules for

> such representation, for the explication and interpretation of reality (Greenfield 1981, p. 16).

His final word on Geertz (and on interpretation) is to say:

> [Geertz's] method of portrayal [which is 'descriptive and expository'] appears deceptively simple, but it points a way through a host of problems and offers means that are not widely employed in trying to understand cultural entities that are closer to us and that shape us even as we shape them (Greenfield 1981, p. 19).

Greenfield's achievement

Greenfield has travelled far from that way of seeing the world into which he was socialised or 'carefully schooled' (Greenfield 1979, p. 10). This was a world in which, in his own words, 'systems theory — or at least a rather well ordered organisational world — floated comfortably about me. I didn't question it, any more than the goldfish does his bowl. There was no alternative' (Greenfield 1977–78, p. 87). Bristol put an end to all that: 'What I did in Bristol was to startle others with a vision which was new to me and which I had grasped with some difficulty and stress over a period of three or four years' (Greenfield 1977–78, p. 87). And what happened in 1974 at Bristol? Greenfield recounts his experience:

> When I arrived in Bristol, I arrived two or three days late, people were already aware of that paper. And the next morning when I got up to, not to read the paper, but to speak to it, I sensed the incredible tension. And I went through the formula of mumbling a few words about the content of the paper, there was a brief reaction to it and then it was like the storm broke. There was a forest of hands waving in the air and people wanted to challenge the things I was saying, to ask questions about it, to support it. There was generally a furore . . . and I was aware also of a personal reaction, I suppose, from some people. I was regarded as having said the wrong thing, a rebel in some sense, although I didn't think of myself that way (Macpherson 1981).

His has been a long and lonely journey for, until the appearance of Bates's and Hodgkinson's work, it was he, and he alone in educational administration, who was prepared to query the assumptions on which the field rested. In so doing he was casting aside a generation of academic work as virtually wasted effort. If this was not enough, the stinging barbs and epithets such as: 'ideological hegemony' (Greenfield 1978, p. 1; 1979a, p. 98); 'sterility [of theory]' (Greenfield 1978, p. 9); 'scientism' (Greenfield 1980, p. 51); 'academic cartel' (Greenfield 1977–78, p. 81); 'the methods of an empirical, mindless, logical positivism that relies more heavily on the scientific method: controlled experimentalism' (Greenfield 1978, p. 7); and 'the sophistication of data analysis cannot make up for the emptiness or irrelevance of the concepts to which they apply' (Greenfield 1979c, p. 169) which he occasionally employed to describe the quality of mind in the field must have hurt the doyens and tribal elders even more and earnt him their resentment.

In the face of his challenge and such charges, why have so few, other than Griffiths and Willower, sought to reply? Does this reflect an unwillingness or incapacity on the part of those who have refused to go down the road with him? Does it signal the hope that if he remains unacknowledged he will end up as a voice crying in the wilderness? Or does it suggest that perhaps others harbour similar (private) misgivings but lack the courage to make these public? The answers to these questions remain a mystery.

Whatever the circumstances of those who do remain silent, Greenfield has shown great personal courage. Not only has he queried the worth of an activity which provides his own livelihood, but throughout his written work he is scrupulously and utterly honest with his readers in admitting his shortcomings. He has done educational administration a great service by awakening it to the key questions which have plagued social theory and the social science disciplines, particularly in the upheavals of the 1960s and their aftermath. As has already been pointed out, he has raised questions about the status of theory, and the relationship between science and ideology, touched on matters to do with the sociology of knowledge and sought to give priority of place to the analysis of 'meaning'. For a field which has traditionally shied away from, ignored or ducked these issues, this represents a meritorious and substantial achievement.

The responses of Griffiths and Willower

The style of exposition and analysis adopted so far in this monograph has been to disclose the mode of reasoning or theorising evident in Greenfield's discourse. This has been done quite deliberately to point up, in the most vivid manner possible, the ways in which disputation discloses a mental universe. This disclosure is evident not only in Greenfield's discourse, but also in that of Griffiths and Willower. Collectively the work of those three theorists provides evidence of three things: one, substantive issues over which they are divided; two, disagreements about the appropriateness and legitimacy of the very terminologies in which they couch their differences; and three, various reflections on self and definitions of self in the context of their work and careers. This is most marked in the cases of Greenfield and Griffiths. In essence, then, much of the writing that makes up this debate, when taken together as a whole, has the flavour or feel about it of intellectual life history.

Griffiths: creeping scepticism

Like Greenfield, Griffiths has begun to dispense with much in educational administration that he formerly esteemed highly. Similarly too, the point of departure for Griffiths has been his own experience of life in educational organisations as an administrator. His qualms began to firm at Bristol, more as a result of the opening address at the conference by Lord Morris of Grasmere, than because of Greenfield's address although Greenfield's paper did make Griffiths aware that: 'My colleagues and I use a rather abstract language to talk about administrator behavior' (Griffiths 1979a, p. 41–2). Lord Morris said a number of things in his address (Hughes 1975, pp. 13–19), but the one which struck a responsive chord with Griffiths was this remark: 'People are going to be more difficult to govern, or if you like, the public are going to be more difficult to manage' (Hughes 1975, p. 181).

In short, Lord Morris argued that the administrator 'need not aim to compete with [Thomas] Arnold or with Jowett [of Balliol College, Oxford]' but 'will have to show more of the arts and skills of politics' (Hughes 1975, p. 18).

The other stimulus informing the disenchantment Griffiths expresses for the field derives from Cohen, March and Olsen's (1972) work on university decision-making processes. The findings of Cohen et al. matter less in the present context than the significance of the study. The attractiveness for Griffiths of 'garbage can theory' is partly that it is, he believes, 'the only theory developed exclusively from studies of educational institutions' (Griffiths 1975, p. 13; 1977, p. 11; 1979a, p. 50) and partly that it accords with his own experience as a university dean. For him, the work of Cohen et al. 'appears to explain *certain* aspects of university governance' (Griffiths 1977, p. 11, emphasis added). The nerve it touches is Griffiths's own experiences of what might broadly be called the 'non-rational' and 'informal' sides of organisational and administrative life.

Griffiths's re-awakening has been hinted at earlier in this monograph. As he suggests in the following quote this has been a difficult experience.

> Perrow's phrase 'think oneself out of' is central to this paper; as a result, the paper will be awkward at times and the conclusions will be groping, not polished and positive. I have long had an uneasiness about the assumptions underlying organizational theory. While it may be only a type of face-saving for me, Perrow's comment that 'notions that were dimly recognized but put aside' is apt. My book *Administrative Theory* should have been revised years ago, but I did not feel comfortable in doing so. I think that this paper justifies that discomfort (Griffiths 1979b, p. 44).

His half-dozen attempts to re-assess his own position and the field do not specifically address points that Greenfield has made (save in parts of Griffiths 1975 and 1977). Thus, he is *not* to be seen, strictly, as a respondent to Greenfield but *more in his own right* addressing his own particular concerns. In this sense, the so-called 'Griffiths-Greenfield debate' (Herda 1978) is a misnomer.

Griffiths: flirting with the experiential

In contrast to Greenfield who displays and juxtaposes within his work example after example of literary, dramatic, artistic and social-scientific images and accounts of 'existential reality', Griffiths is content to propose avenues of research which will lead to new theory. All are grounded in qualitative experiences and most spring from his own work background.

Griffiths (1975) begins by claiming that Greenfield's view of phenomenology, as espoused at Bristol, was 'naive and rudimentary', but that he 'should be thanked for shaking us out of theory lethargy' (p. 17). It is this latter insistence which is significant, *not*, to repeat an earlier point, the label 'phenomenology'. To reinforce this observation, Griffiths (1976, p. 11) later claims: 'As I understand Greenfield he is saying that it is now time to change the paradigm used to study and practice educational administration. I quite agree with him'. So, phenomenology, but not as Greenfield has explicated it, is worthy of a look for Griffiths (1975, p. 17).

While he does little to elucidate the meaning of the word, it is attractive to him because it gives 'appropriate recognition to the people in the organisation' (Griffiths 1977, p. 6).

What persuades Griffiths is Denton's (1970) work. The reason is not hard to find. Griffiths (1977, p. 5) cannot bring himself to totally discard the legacy of the theory movement, as he believes Greenfield wants to and so Denton is congenial to him because of statements like the following: 'To talk of organization with the terms of existential language would not be to immediately negate, throw out, all organizational theory, but would be to question the status of such theory' (Denton 1970, p. 140).[4] However, his endorsement of Denton is not wholehearted (Griffiths 1977, p. 6). What he does take from Denton is an emphasis on 'the ordinary experiences of individual people' and 'the feeling-states of individual persons' (Griffiths 1977, p. 5; 1979a, p. 42). When linked with newer perspectives on universities (Cohen, March and Olsen 1972) and schools (Weick 1976), this leads him to propose three things: an emphasis in theory on the realities of administrative life; the kinds of research necessary to revitalise theory; and an acknowledgement that theory has ignored the existence of minorities and subordinates.

Beginning with the view that 'school principals feel that they do not have clearly defined jobs' (Griffiths 1975, p. 15), Griffiths (1977, p. 11; 1979a, p. 45) then cites events in the lives of two school superintendents plus 'a few days in the life of a university dean' (Griffiths 1979a, p. 45) — two pages of events (presumably) from his own work experience. He then asks (Griffiths 1977, p. 11), 'Just how reasonable and rational are those events?' He makes the observation that 'the dean was constantly involved with other people' (Griffiths 1979a, p. 46) and stresses his 'need to talk things out, to negotiate, to bargain, and to do it on a face-to-face basis' (Griffiths 1979a, p. 47). This leads him to conclude, with the statement (with which Greenfield would most certainly wholeheartedly agree), 'The practice of administration is largely an art and reflects the personal style of an administrator and the environment in which the person functions (Griffiths 1979a, p. 53; 1978, p. 82).

If this is the reality for administrators and 'there are situations which no administrator, however capable, can comprehend and resolve unless changes are brought about to alter the environment or the organisation' (Griffiths 1979a, p. 57) then the kind of research which is necessary is that which accords centrality of place to such experiences, or 'the actual practice of administration' (Griffiths 1979a, p. 45) plus research on

> [how administrators] function in their jobs; how they learn the 'territory'; what styles they develop; whether the styles are consistent throughout their careers or change as situations change; what makes them effective; indeed, what is effectiveness in educational administration? (Griffiths 1979a, p. 43).

He concludes:

> The knowledge we need can be obtained only by the intensive study of individuals through observations, and descriptions should be written in terms of ordinary experiences in ordinary language (Griffiths 1979a, p. 43).

It is difficult to conceive of Greenfield quibbling substantially with such programmatic statements. To that extent their differences are more apparent than real.

Griffiths's final plea is to accord some recognition to unions, women and blacks. He writes:

> Theories of administration and organization are written as though there were no unions or other formal employee groups existing within organizations (Griffiths 1977, p. 13).
>
> One wonders why more attention has not been paid to the disregard for the plight of women and minorities by organizational theorists and to the existence of unions (Griffiths 1979b, p. 46).

Griffiths's explanation for these omissions is that 'organizational theories have been based upon the perspective of top executives' (1979b, p. 46). The consequence is that

> the very meaning of the words *employee*, *administration*, and *governing board* all need redefinition. They have no meaning in first-rate universities and colleges if they are defined in reference to traditional organizational theory (Griffiths 1979b, p. 48, original emphasis).[5]

Such theories as have been adopted in educational administration 'are essentially Great Man theories' (Griffiths 1979, p. 17). However, as Lord Morris of Grasmere writes:

> The new Machiavelli can no longer make up his mind what he wants to do, and then bring the people round to putting up with it. His primary problem, almost it seems his *whole* problem, is to find some act of government, or *any* act of government, which is acceptable (Hughes 1975, p. 14, original emphasis).

Griffiths: clinging to theory

In spite of this emphasis on experience, Griffiths remains wedded to a notion of theory at odds with his proposals. Initially, he queried Greenfield's equation of 'theory' with 'meaning', which Griffiths believed equalled no more than 'commonsense', and remained optimistic about theory in educational administration (Griffiths 1975, pp. 17–18): 'Nothing I have said should be construed to mean that I have abandoned my belief in the promise of a solid theoretical base for educational administration'. So far so good, but then Griffiths begins to oscillate between optimism and pessimism. While on the one hand, 'theory has something to offer it has less to offer the practitioner than we thought' and there have been 'achievements [in] the past twenty years' (Griffiths 1979a, p. 43), such that 'I . . . would not deprecate the theoretical work of the past' (Griffiths 1979b, p. 43). Nevertheless, the fact remains that 'practice goes far beyond the realm of theory' (Griffiths 1977, p. 14) and that 'any program based on theory would be a very thin one' (Griffiths 1976, p. 14). Then he offers a telling confession:

> When the theory movement in educational administration got underway in the 1950s the big drive was to develop the 'theory'. Possibly in an effort to overcome the nontheoretical, anti-intellectualism of the

> times, several of us attempted to construct highly abstract and formally elaborate theories. Whilst it was good fun at the time it was not particularly helpful and, in fact, might even have been harmful *because people were led to believe we were much farther along than we actually were*. I hope the effect of this paper will not be to stimulate another similar round of theory production (Griffiths 1977, pp. 15–16, emphasis added).

Finally, in one other remarkable passage, Griffiths (1975, p. 15) claims 'the theory movement has been perverted to an ideology', such that it needs 'renovation and redirection'. Again the question is prompted: how real is his conflict with Greenfield in view of such sentiments?

Griffiths (1975, p. 15) sees theory as providing 'insight into how theoreticians think' to administrators, enabling the latter 'to understand and interpret' research and to provide 'a frame of reference' for conceptualising problems. Equally though, 'New theories are likely to be highly specific and focused on particular types of organization. The search for a general theory of administration will be long delayed'[6] (Griffiths 1977, p. 15), and 'emerging theories will likely use situations and situational variables as axioms.' Here, 'theory is built on observations of organizations — one by one'. The similarities with Greenfield are even more pronounced, especially where he asks, 'Why are we afraid of the specific?' (Greenfield 1978, p. 15).

Where does all this leave him? What definition of theory does Griffiths opt for? While most, if not all, of what he has argued for is not inconsistent with an *inductive*, theory-generating stance (Glaser and Strauss 1979), Griffiths, nonetheless, adheres to a *deductive* conception of theory: 'a set of assumptions from which propositions can be deduced by mathematical or logical reasoning' (1977, p. 9; 1978, p. 82). This is curious, for Griffiths is clearly disposed (in a way in which Willower is not) towards posing fundamental questions (e.g. 'can there be a science of organizations similar to the science of physics or chemistry?' (Griffiths 1979b, p. 59)), and given to some frank admissions (in addition to those cited, he admits that 'organizational theory as it is known today was developed, largely, if not entirely, through the assumptions of logical positivism' (Griffiths 1979b, p. 56)). Thus, as Herda has written:

> [He] wants to utilize phenomenology methodology in research, but develop theory via a positivist position. The inherent problems of such a union are not recognized by Griffiths (Herda 1978, p. 95).

This observation implies the existence of an irreconcilable duality of thinking.

But clearly, Griffiths has moved an extraordinarily long way towards a position of self-awareness and self-reflection which is in the spirit of Greenfield's own questioning and consistent with the Gestalt-switching terminology referred to earlier (i.e. 'ways of seeing'). Griffiths, on occasions, writes that 'it is necessary to *view* organisations with different *spectacles*' and that 'the theories we have been using have limited our *view*' (1978, pp. 80–1, emphasis added). In particular, he calls for dropping of 'the role spectacles' (Griffiths 1977, p. 7. See also 1978, p. 88).[7] In summary, it may be said that there are shades of inconsistency or contradiction within

Griffiths's thinking. Clearly, he sees much of the past as ill-founded but he is unable to completely let go. He is genuinely torn. Thus, the opening paragraph of his latest contribution to the discussion has a personal ring about it. It reads:

> The title of this paper may be an exaggeration. But if educational administration is not in a state of intellectual turmoil, it should be, because its parent, the field of organizational theory, certainly is (Griffiths 1979b, p. 43).

If the field is in 'turmoil', then so too is Griffiths.

Willower: pragmatism as virtue

At a 1977 University of Rochester UCEA seminar, Willower (1979b, p. 63) referred, in his opening remarks, to 'a lot of pontification in educational administration with regard to theory and research', rather like a generation earlier. He went on, 'Although I am reluctant to do so, I will add to those debates (which began twenty years ago), because I believe it is time for a less introspective, more pragmatic perspective'.[8] His contributions, in which he makes more than passing reference to Greenfield, range over four articles (Willower 1979a, 1979b, 1980, 1981). What are the contours of this mind, with its initial diffidence about entering the academic lists?

The adjective 'pragmatic' is the key to this edifice. There is an intellectual political economy evident in Willower's writings and it is of a decidedly utilitarian bent or frame. In this view of the world, theory and research 'are not extensively used in the practice of educational administration' (Willower 1979b, p. 78). However, 'I believe that they can be fruitfully employed in practice and that they should be' (Willower 1979b, p. 78, and see 1980, p. 2). To the things which count (methodology, theory and research), 'a pragmatic criterion' should be applied (Willower 1979b, pp. 68, 71; 1979a, p. 35), and it should be applied by practitioners, who (in preparation programs) would be exposed to a multitude of theories and concepts about organisations, and who 'would be encouraged to be skeptical consumers' (Willower 1981, p. 130). The political economy of this universe, then, is part of the market ideal of consumer sovereignty. It is in this respect that the sentence 'In the end, research must speak for itself' (Willower 1979b, p. 71) makes sense.

Ultimately, this pragmatic temper is grounded in the reality of pedagogy. Readers are enjoined by Willower (1981, pp. 130, 138, note 79) to examine the outlines of a preparation program sketched earlier on (Willower 1973), and to see his 'philosophic position' as the 'position I proposed in connection with preparation programs' (Willower 1981, p. 134). In the concluding remarks of the earlier work (Willower 1973) there is a statement about the yardstick that practitioners employ to determine utility. It is the capacity of conceptual frameworks 'to explain coherently what goes on in schools' (p. 304). Implicit in this world view is a species of academic eclecticism or pluralism, consistent with a market ideal, for 'we need many ways of seeing and seeking' (Willower 1981, p. 131).

Whilst users and potential users are the final arbiters of utility, there are other safeguards or quality control standards to which intellectual output must conform. The three products of academic endeavour in educational administration, 'theory', 'research' and 'knowledge', must adhere to 'the canons of science' (Willower 1981, p. 127). Science belongs to the realms of inquiry (Willower 1979a, p. 33). But, there is another realm, the non-scientific, or the world of ideology. Insofar as an ideology fits science 'it is an ideology that is anti-ideology [!] in the sense that it requires commitment only to the methods of inquiry, not to a wider set of beliefs or any kind of orthodoxy. Anything can be questioned. The commitment is to questioning' (Willower 1980, p. 9).

Where is the realm of the non-scientific to be found? Whereas 'more traditional theories such as social system, role and bureaucratic theory . . . are part of current science' (Willower 1979a, p. 33), three alternative theories ('two are critical of science as it is usually [?] practised and the third is critical of current theory' (p. 32)) 'whose ideologies fit the times' (p. 32) are currently in vogue: phenomenology (pp. 28–30), Marxism (pp. 23–8) and the 'garbage can' model (pp. 30–2). Only the latter has shown 'considerable utility in empirical studies' (p. 36). Phenomenologists, with whom Greenfield is mistakenly associated (Willower 1981, pp. 116–17), and Marxists are 'advocates promulgating their positions' and are 'ideologists from top to toe' (Willower 1980, pp. 7, 9). The world of ideology is a bogus world according to Willower, whose fantasies must be differentiated from the real empirical world of pragmatists.

The conception of educational administration implicit in Willower's writings is a kind of conveyor belt or delivery system. The recipe he offers for any (temporary) interruption or breakdown is 'more of the same' (i.e. theory and research) and/or the exhortation to keep 'trying harder' at science. He writes:

> I deplore shifts in our field from curiosity and detachment toward ideology. Our theories and research should be aimed at warranted explanations, not at the vindication of ideological commitments (Willower 1979a, p. 37).

Willower: a non-problematic world

Willower's vision is of a comfortable world replete with simple dualisms: theory vs practice, objective vs subjective, reason vs experience and science vs ideology. The last of these is, in fact, a resurrection of the hoary old distinction between fact and value. For Willower, the world of science is an inviolate world. There is no recognition or acknowledgement that science, like any other human activity or pursuit is anchored in the context of time, place and the biographies of individual scientists. Science is a 'form of life' (Wittgenstein 1978, para. 241; Winch 1977, pp. 40–2) or a 'finite province of meaning' (Schutz and Luckmann 1980, pp. 22–3; James 1901, p. 292). William James, one of Willower's (1981, p. 134) justificatory sources for his pragmatic 'philosophic position', is worth quoting on science and the objects of theory. He writes:

> The sciences are full of these alternatives. Which theory is then to be believed? *That theory will be most generally believed which, besides offering us objects able to account satisfactorily for our sensible experience, also offers those which are most interesting, those which*

> *appeal most urgently to our aesthetic, emotional and active needs.* So here, in the higher intellectual life, the same selection among general conceptions goes on which went on among the sensations themselves (James 1901, p. 312, original emphasis).

Willower's discussion of science is curious, indeed lopsided. In the article where he confronts the question of the relationship between ideology and science, he has this to say:

> Particular theories tend to harmonize with certain values and beliefs and clash with others. Futhermore, theories may reflect the dominant values of a culture or a time, not to mention those of individual theorists or groups of theorists (Willower 1979a, p. 21).

There is an acknowledgement here that knowledge springs from, is linked or tied to, ideology, or what Ricouer (1981) calls 'something *in which* men live and think, rather than a conception *that* they pose . . . It operates behind our backs . . . We think from it rather than about it' (p. 237, original emphasis).

Willower (1979a) then defines ideology as 'attitudes, values, and general orientations about man and the world' (p. 21). Next, he uses this to explore 'the nonscientific side of *certain* theories' (p. 21, emphasis added). Which ones? Three: Marxism, phenomenology and the 'garbage can' theory. Then, two pages later, there appears this disturbing passage:

> The ideology that fits these theories *contrasts sharply with* the ideology that fits some of the more traditional ones [social system; bureaucratic and various leadership theories] (Willower 1979a, p. 23, emphasis added).

Immediately, a dichotomy has been set up: two classes of theories with their attendant classes of ideologies.

Ten pages later, following a discussion of 'certain' theories, Willower (1979a) returns to the general point. The ideologies of 'certain' theories 'fit the times' (p. 32), and contrast with 'more traditional' theories which 'are part of current science' (p. 33). A new element has been introduced: only *some* (traditional) theories with *different* ideologies ('where unity, stability, abstraction, reason and rationality are more salient' (p. 33)) are scientific. What Willower has done is to begin by grounding *all* knowledge in 'general orientations' (1979a, p. 21) and then ended by grounding *some* knowledge in *an* ideology which he deems *better* than other ideologies.[2] This is a slide from the general to the particular. In so doing he has lost sight of the point that the social scientist, as *scientist*, is 'a being which is never in the sovereign position of a subject capable of distancing itself from the totality of its conditioning' (Ricouer 1981, p. 243).

Willower and Greenfield

It is in only two of his four recent offerings that Willower has substantially confronted Greenfield. In the first of his four articles he simply amended Greenfield's understanding of phenomenology (Willower 1979b, pp. 70–1). In his second contribution he again referred to Greenfield as a phenomenologist, but queried his phenomenological pedigree and remarked that he knew of 'no genuinely phenomenological studies of school organizations' (Willower 1979a, p. 29). Earlier, he made the same remark and concluded that no pragmatic criterion could be applied. In a throw-away barb he referred to phenomenological research 'at its best' as '[no] more than social psychology with a mission' (Willower 1979b, p. 71).

Willower has two major criticisms of Greenfield. Firstly, Willower claims that while Greenfield is critical of conceptions of knowledge at odds with his own, he fails to spell out the epistemological grounds of his own theoretical position. He writes:

> If the phenomenological criticism of science is genuinely epistemological, then the critics must specify their own epistemological position or convict themselves of intellectual irresponsibility . . . I cannot tell from reading Greenfield or others . . . whether a full epistemological critique or a narrower methodological one is intended. They should address this issue in a straightforward manner (Willower 1980, p. 8).

He reiterates this criticism in his latest contribution (Willower 1981, pp. 116–7).

Secondly, Willower suggests that Greenfield dwells on examples of what is 'bad' or ignoble about schools (Willower 1980, pp. 14–16) but without providing any image of the 'good' (Willower 1981, p. 132). Implicit in this is his awareness of the existential strand in Greenfield's work, which he describes as a form of 'empathy' (Willower 1980, p. 11). However, there is an ambivalence in Willower's discussion of this phenomenon. On the one hand he recommends 'experience audits, logs, diaries, biography, photography, film and novels' (Willower 1980, p. 11) as worthy investigative tools. Indeed on the last of this list he suggests:

> D.H. Lawrence's description of Ursula Brangwen's bitter frustrations as a teacher can tell an administrator something about the plight of a novice teacher that most textbooks miss (Willower 1980, p. 11).

Greenfield would have no quarrel with this endorsement. But Willower is not comfortable with such literary insight. 'Empathy is not explanation', he writes (1980, p. 12), and he confesses that 'I have not seen anything explicitly using novels to generate hypotheses' (1980, p. 23, footnote 44). However, Waldo (1968) has treated this issue at some length.

The final point to note about Willower is the way in which he tries to debunk people like Greenfield and those whose writings fit a broadly subjectivist position. This takes two forms, the first of which is to devalue anything which highlights feeling and a sense of being, which Greenfield's work does, by making statements like the following: 'there is a long and rich tradition of research on feelings, attitudes, and beliefs that has no connection with phenomenology' (Willower 1981, p. 127). No citations are provided; and the tradition is never specified. The second form of debunking is to endorse broadly qualitative methodological approaches or 'practice-oriented research' (Willower 1980, p. 16), but then to turn around and claim that this is nothing new, or that, in effect, 'we've seen it all before'. One example illustrates the point (but see also Willower 1981, p. 124 and 1980, pp. 16–17):

> This aphilosophical approach [of Greenfield] might make the general viewpoint more palatable to those in educational administration who

> examine it superficially, since some of its points are quite non-controversial. Examples are the desirability of qualitative studies of all sorts, concern with individuals and their perceptions and constructions of their environments, and the importance of values in educational administration. Virtually everyone would agree with such points. Indeed, they have been articulated often over the years in educational administration (Willower 1981, p. 117).

This quote says it all. A pragmatic standpoint can cope with or accommodate any and every conceivable idea.

Rethinking educational administration: contrasted visions of the world

The discussion which forms the body of this monograph began by couching the encounter between Greenfield, Griffiths and Willower in terms of a 'debate'. Herda (1978) uses this word and so too do Griffiths (1979a, p. 263) and Willower (1979a, p. 29). Indeed, it has been used here in Figure 1. The reason for its initial adoption in this discussion is simply that people in educational administration circles refer to the recent writings of these three men, but especially Greenfield and Griffiths, in such terms as the 'Griffiths-Greenfield debate'.

The temptation to stick with the word 'debate' has deliberately been eschewed as this account progressed. The highly reflective nature and form of the bulk of the writings ought to be obvious by now from the many citations provided. More appropriately, there has been a 'rethink', as the title suggests (by two men, not three), or a 'laying bare', in highly reflective tones, such as would be done in a life history, when an 'assumptive world' (Young 1977, p. 3) is revealed. There is no hint, save at the outset in the *UCEA Review*, and perhaps latterly in the *Educational Administration Quarterly*, Fall 1980, of the standard form of academic rebuttal: 'rejoinder to', 'comment on' or 'reply to'.

A number of questions emerge from this review. Some suggestions and thoughts are provided with each.

Is there any warrant for a separate sphere of studies bearing the label 'administrative'?

Greenfield's pessimism as regards this question is there for all to see in the quote which heads this monograph. His proposal for 'humanities' is interesting. It evokes the image of what is commonly known as the 'philosopher-king' or the leader who is also, and pre-eminently, a scholar. There is ample precedent for this suggestion amongst administrators of schools. Those who identify themselves in the tradition of Arnold of Rugby and Thring of Uppingham (i.e. within the English public school tradition with its nineteenth-century 'muscular Christianity') have always espoused a classical education. Such school heads (e.g. J.R. Darling (1978) and F. Fletcher (1937), Darling's mentor) saw no necessity for 'administrative' training, and, if pressed, would probably have viewed it as 'vulgar'.

Do practising and prospective administrators need some form of credentialling?

The answer to this question is normally provided by employing and/or registration authorities, be they state or private. The state tradition, in Australia at least, has been to promote to the principalship those who exhibit proven merit as classroom pedagogues and whose good fortune it is to be senior on a career roll. The private tradition has been to appoint either clergymen or lay persons (often very much younger than their state counterparts) who exhibit flair, panache or 'character'. There is often a cavalier air about such methods of appointment. If the memoirs of school heads are to be believed then there has been a lot of chance and sheer good fortune in private school appointments. Archdale, for example, writes:

> That was how I became a headmistress. By avoiding teaching as a profession, by a series of lucky accidents, and by not applying for the job . . . There I was landed in a job which I wasn't sure I wanted and which I had accepted on a hunch (Archdale 1972, pp. 43, 44).

What form of credentialling? Who should do it? How should it be undertaken?

Apart from the more traditional university-based higher degree programs (at Masters or Doctoral levels) three other proposals merit attention. A recent trend in Victoria has been the establishment of a statutory body, the Institute of Educational Administration. This organisation offers a short-course in-service program in which approximately forty participants are cloistered together for a period of up to one month. They are fed a 'leadership' diet by a team of visiting consultants. A high profile overseas academic is 'wheeled in' for the first fortnight and local academics fill the remaining time slots. Participants are not formally credentialled, but the interesting question is whether or not the Victorian Education Department will make participation mandatory for all those who want to become principals in state schools.

A second alternative, more in keeping with the reflective mood captured in the writings detailed here, can be briefly sketched. One striking difference in Australia between private and state school heads is the preparedness of the former (albeit a small number) to write memoirs or quasi-autobiographical accounts of their careers. The dangers of self-adulation, glorification and *a posteriori* rationalisation are obvious in such accounts, but a hybrid or variant in the form of collaborative life history seems to have some merit (Watson 1976; De Waele and Harré, 1979). Administrators would be encouraged to document their experiences and to lay bare their outlooks and world views, sharing these with their peers. Documented accounts would form a case-based archive or administrative knowledge stock, invaluable for the socialisation of the administrative neophyte.

Greenfield's suggestion, in keeping with his more recent existential mood is a 'monastic' approach. He writes:

> My solution to the problem of training administrators is to recognize that administrative training is training for life and that only those who have some insight into life — its ironies, joys, and tragedies — are fit to be administrators. Again we are left with the problem: how can such insight be acted upon? Pushed to be a technologist in the face of values, I would urge what might be called the monastery solution. In this approach it would be recognized that it is life that must be understood and that life and the human spirit can take many forms

> and express itself in many realities. The aim, therefore, would be to place administrators-in-training in total environments that are alien to all they regard as normal and natural. We might begin the learning process by placing the novitiate in an actual monastery, preferably one carved into the cliffs of a Greek mountain where the monks are sworn to vows of total silence. Then they might spend time as bartender, bouncer, or manager of a disco, followed by service as an orderly in a mental institution, or indeed as a patient in such an institution. Enough of these 'monasteries' would have to be experienced to give the would-be controller of other people's lives a sense of terror — that is, of the varied organizational realities in which people live their lives. The jolts and disorientation of this experience would be directed at making administrators take a few journeys through the doors in the wall of reality in hopes that on their return they would see life in more complex, ambiguous, and humane terms (Greenfield 1980, p. 48).

In conclusion it can be said that what this monograph has really done is to document a language game, in which the players have rendered visible their strategies and systems of reference 'by commenting on their adversaries' playing of language games, and by reflecting upon the games they are playing themselves' (Pocock 1981, p. 973). In particular it has shown how the theorising *of* educational administration exposes differences *about* educational administration. The thinking of three minds has been displayed. Three separate 'world views' or 'pre-cognitive vision[s] of the world' (Jones 1970, p. 41) are made manifest in this discourse. These reveal, in their turn, to borrow for the last time from John Berger, three distinctive 'ways of seeing'.

Notes

1 Greenfield was not asked to present a paper at the 1978 IIP which was held in Canada, his own country. Nor has he ever been invited to present a paper to the Division A of the American Educational Research Association.

2 As does Willower (1980, p. 12) with his remark:

> Last year, Hugh Fraser and I conducted telephone interviews with 50 school superintendents concerning their feelings about their work. I barely resisted the temptation to write and publish side by side two accounts of this research, one in the usual style [*sic*], the other announcing a phenomenological breakthrough, a study tapping the superintendents' constructions of reality including their finest hours and their bitterest regrets. The point is that the two reports would not have differed substantively even though the phenomenological trappings might have created a superficial impression that they did.

3 There are, in fact, *three*, not two, contrary to the claim of the authors of the text citing the image (McLuhan et al. 1977, p. 12). It is possible to see, simultaneously, a young girl, an old maid, *and* an ogre (in part).

4 How closely has Griffiths read this text? Note the word 'existential' in the citation. Griffiths (1979a, p. 42) claims that since Bristol 'I have read in

phenomenology and have been influenced by David E. Denton'. The question is: does Denton's work constitute an example of phenomenology?

5 On the significant differences in the designations 'subordinate', 'worker', 'employee', 'colleague' and the like see Turner 1977.

6 On the universality of theory, or its lack, also see Griffiths 1979a, p. 50; 1979b, pp. 51-3.

7 A call not out of keeping with Giddens (1979, pp. 115–120).

8 Willower has little time for those who rethink. See footnote 39 of Willower 1979b, p. 83 where he labels Halpin as a solipsist.

9 Detailed in footnote 55 of Willower 1980, p. 24 where he uses the very term 'dichotomy' used in the paragraph above.

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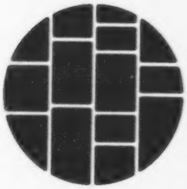
Readings



1

Organization theory as ideology

T.B. Greenfield

Experience is mysterious, for it is not entirely clear how we come to understand what we do and what is happening to us (cf. Laing 1967, p. 17). This article argues, therefore, that the placing of meaning upon experience is an act of enormous importance. As it continues, the argument recognizes the interpretation of human experience as the bedrock upon which human life is built and upon which organization theory should stand. Organization theory, however, usually ignores such mysteries in human life, and it does so at the cost of impoverishing its own insight into people's lives and social reality. In the name of comprehensiveness and simplicity, theory usually oversimplifies the variety and complexity of human experience within organizations. In a fundamental sense, organization *is* experience. The quality of experience within organizations, of course, varies greatly from person to person, from time to time, and from place to place. The gaps between levels or kinds of experience constitute what we recognize as structure in organization. Any links or transitions across these gaps will have more to do with the forces that govern the outcome of a dice throw than with those that apparently determine at what time the sun will rise tomorrow.[1]

Some people invent ideas that give shape and meaning to their experience; others borrow ideas to understand themselves. And many have little or no choice as others' ideas are forced upon them in the same way that the air surrounds them. They must breathe the air or suffocate; so must they accept others' ideas or break through them to a new atmosphere, to other ideas, to a new reality. This context of ideas by which we understand our experience is what I mean by organization. In this sense, organization exists whenever people accept sets of ideas as fit and proper guides for their own behavior and for that of others. Even though these ideas may be internally inconsistent and do not always allow us to predict what will happen when we act in accordance with them, we remain dependent upon ideas for ordering our experience and for building an understanding of the world around us.

Artists have long understood the relationship between experience and ideas, between symbol and reality. My dissatisfaction with much of contemporary organization theory—or at least with that form of it which prevails in administrative studies—is that people who call themselves social scientists have forgotten the experiential basis of the ideas they use to interpret reality and are now advocates, instead, of a particular vision of reality that holds no greater truth than a number of alternate views. And I would go further: systems theory and structural-functionalist thinking—which I see as the ideological hegemony in administrative studies—is demonstrably bad theory and leads to sterile research.

It is bad theory because organizations are, in Pondy's (1978) term, "multicephalous," i.e., they have many brains that sustain mind, meaning, values, and culture. Despite this recognized complexity in organizations, theorists are often content to speak about them in terms of primitive models that seldom advance beyond images more complex than the catalogue, the clock, or the gyroscope. Boulding (1968) noted that the "advance in the level of theoretical analysis" provided by systems theory as "a new discipline" had hardly carried the field beyond an understanding of mechanistic and naturally existing systems. And, he added, "a mild word of warning even to Management Science . . . that in dealing with human personalities and organizations we are dealing with systems in the empirical world far beyond our ability to formulate." He went on to conclude that "we should not be wholly surprised, therefore, if our simpler systems, for all their importance and validity, occasionally let us down" (p. 10). Few theorists over the ensuing years seem to have noted, let alone heeded, Boulding's warning, for Pondy (1978) concludes over twenty years later that the "dominating" concern of organization theorists has been "explaining why organizations work well and do good."

I will return to these points again, but let us listen first to what some artists have said about experience and reality. William Blake (in *Poems of Blake*) asks:

> What is the price of Experience? do men buy
> it for a song?
> Or wisdom for a dance in the street? No, it is
> bought with the price
> Of all that a man hath, his house, his wife,
> his children.[2]

And one of Pirandello's (1954) six characters tells the theater producer who wants to redirect his life:

> Each one of us has a whole world of things inside him. . . . And each of us has his own particular world. How can we understand each other if into the words which I speak I put the sense and the value of things as I understand them myself. . . . While at the same time whoever is listening to them inevitably assumes them to have the sense and value that they have for him. . . . The sense and value that they have in the world that he has within him? We think we understand one another. . . . But we never really do understand![3]

These questions posed by Blake and Pirandello are inevitable and necessary questions for anyone who wants to understand himself and others, as indeed they are for the social scientist who wants to understand abstractly and in theoretical terms what social organization is and what it means to people within it.

Let me say something about myself for a moment and about some experiences that now seem enormously significant to me, though they did not at the time of their occurrence. I was born into a farm family in Saskatchewan, Canada, and began my formal learning in a school where a single teacher taught many children in eight grades. We used to watch the hands of the clock on the teacher's desk move slowly to four. At that hour, if one were old enough and had no younger brothers or sisters to transport home by buggy or cutter, one might ride home on horseback through an open, unspoiled, tranquil landscape to a homestead that, short years before, was virgin prairie. At a point of crisis in my family, I went to live in the city. The farm part of my family has never shared my city life, though I can, or could, shift fairly easily back to farm ways. My farm family does not understand what I do as a professor. They would be impressed and incredulous if told that I had presented this article at a large conference in New York and that people who had travelled far were willing to sit still for twenty minutes and listen. The shift between these separate realities is one that I am coming to understand in Blake's terms: understanding experience exacts its price and comes only from shifting perspectives, from the juxtaposing of one perspective against another.

I speak in these personal terms to make a point about experience, organizations, and ideology—three words whose meanings, in my view, are closely intertwined. The self that lives by one set of values, by one ideology, within one social organization, is not the self that lives by other values, within other ideas, or other organizations, though the same consciousness may connect the two realities. Even more so, then, do different people live within different realities. Under these assumptions, the prime task of the social scientist and the theorist of organizations is to understand those realities if they are to make generalized and abstract statements about them. The ideological or symbolic "explanation" links the experience of individuals and the realities they perceive as social structure.

Poets, saints, charismatic leaders, ideologues, social philosophers, and yes, even organization theorists are important and powerful people because their thoughts can provide the link between experience and reality. The theorist and the symbol-maker are, therefore, linked to those whose lives they explain by a bond that is at once existential and moral. How do we see our life? What place do organizations play in it? What are schools? Can we or our organizations be different? Can we be better too? How? These are questions that organization theory should speak to and, indeed, does speak to. But it should do so by opening up the interpretation of social reality, not by attempting to fix it or control it. It should make clear the process by which we create our social and organizational world; it should not argue for a single interpretation of that reality. It should leave the persons theorized about with a greater understanding of themselves than before the theorists began their work. These are stringent conditions to lay upon social theorizing, and I am unsure whether much or any of it now lives up to them.

The Individual and Social Reality

Recent writings, some by people who participated in this symposium, have defined the theoretical issue sharply and clearly for organization studies as they are conducted in educational administration.[4] I do not propose now to relive old battles or to become nostalgic about them. In this spirit we might consider the words of Iris Murdoch when she asks the disputants in education issues to "use clear ordinary language, not obscure jargon or brutal rhetoric, and keep in mind that while theories are fighting individual children are growing up" (Cox and Boyson 1975, p. 7).

So what is the issue we are talking about here? One cannot go far in organization theory without confronting a basic question: Why do we behave as we do in social organizations? Answering this question seems to me the main justification for organization theory, since it deals with the individual and social reality. In this article, therefore, I would like to move on to deal with the implications of a view that sees organizations as ideological inventions of the human mind—as invented social reality. From this point of view, much of received organization theory appears blind to ideology in organizations and in theories about them. It is blind, too, to the experiential base of ideology and to the struggle of the deviant notion, the radical view, and the charismatic vision against a social reality that is routine, patterned, accepted, and considered right and proper. Organizational theory has too frequently defended conventional social realities and ignored the process whereby sets of people and ideas are in contention over what is reality and how one should behave in it.

Goffman gives us a sense of ideological control of the individual when he discusses Grayson Kirk's reaction when students occupied and despoiled his presidential office at Columbia University. "My God," said Kirk, "how could human beings do a thing like this?" But as Goffman points out, the great sociological question is rather, "How is it that human beings do this sort of thing so rarely? How come persons in authority have been so overwhelmingly successful in conning those beneath them into keeping the hell out of their offices?" (Goffman 1971, p. 288, as quoted in Manning 1976, p. 20). Social order is maintained, therefore, not because of necessary roles and functions operating in some well-working system, but because of ideas in people's minds about how they should treat each other. And the social system now appears, not as an objective reality, but as an ideological social order accepted by individuals or forced upon them. As Goffman (1967) says: "The rules of conduct which bind the actor and the recipient together are the bindings of society.... Others who are present constantly remind the individual that he must keep himself together as a well demeaned person and affirm the sacred quality of these others"(pp. 90–91).

What we see in the social order depends upon the unit of analysis we choose. A major choice occurs when we choose the individual or the system for this purpose. Parsonians and other functionalists begin with the social system. Some years ago, C. Wright Mills wrote *The Sociological Imagination* (1959). I read it as a student in doctoral studies, but soon discarded what it had to say because it appeared too easy to read and too sensible compared with my usual texts. One of the services Mills performs in this book is to translate Talcott Parsons, whose work *The Social System* (1951) has had an enormous influence on studies of organization and administration. This *magnum opus* has formed not only the rhetoric of later theorists, but has also shaped the categories of thought by which they see organizational realities. What language Parsons was writing in Mills never says, but he makes it clear that the whole book can be rendered into four paragraphs of plain English. Part of his translation runs as follows:

> There are "social regularities," which we may observe and which are often quite durable. Such enduring and stable regularities I shall call "structural." It is possible to think of all these regularities within the social system as a great and intricate balance. That this is a metaphor I am now going to forget, because I want you to take as very real my Concept: The social equilibrium. . . .
>
> One point does puzzle me a little: given this social equilibrium, and all the socialization and control that man it, how is it possible that anyone should ever get out of line? This I cannot explain very well, that is, in the terms of my Systematic and General Theory of the social system. And there is another point that is not as clear as I should like it to be: how should I account for social change—that is for history? About these two problems, I recommend that whenever you come upon them, you undertake empirical investigations. [p. 32–33]

Along with the notion of equilibrium in social systems goes the idea of a common core of values. This concept has long appealed to social theorists since Hobbes saw the social contract as the only solution to the "war of all against all." As Zeitlin (1973) points out, functionalists who see society as being in equilibrium around a central core of values face some disconcertingly contradictory evidence: "Are we to believe that in pre-Nazi Germany Junkers, peasants, industrial workers, Catholics, Protestants, Communists, Social Democrats, and Nazis all shared a common value system?"(p. 42). Indeed, can we look at any contemporary society where change and conflict have been so much the order of the day for more than a decade and retain belief in a society ordered around common values?

Social Structure in Terms of Human Meanings

If we reject a superstructure of objective social reality to which individuals must accommodate themselves, what are we left with as an explanation of human personality and group action? The psychological reductionists would offer a set of elemental personal characteristics that our genes or Fortune herself distributes to each of us through some inscrutable design. From these elements, one might then extrapolate the individual personality and ultimately the quality of social institutions. Both Weber and Durkheim reject such arguments by pointing to the fact that the meaning of such presumed psychological elements or "laws" based upon them cannot be deduced without invoking meanings already existing in the social context (Eldridge 1970, pp. 17-18). For example, while some psychologists might claim that intelligence is operationally and independently defined in the Binet scale, the human sociologist points out that Binet's first step in building the scale was to ask teachers in a Paris school near his laboratory what they thought intelligence was and which of their pupils had it.

For Weber, then, the necessary unit for analyzing self and society is the individual human being. All explanations of social and personal phenomena must rest upon subjective meanings that appear "adequate" to the individual (Weber 1947, pp. 88 -100). The task of those who would explain human action and social forms therefore becomes the "interpretation" of human meanings. Weber also recognizes that interpretation of meanings alone will not suffice if we are to understand social phenomena in "causally adequate" terms. The theorist must show how people typically construe social situations and how these constructions have consequences for themselves and for others.

> Interpretive sociology considers the individual and his action as the basic unit, as its "atom." . . . In this approach, the individual is also the upper limit and the sole carrier of meaningful conduct. . . . In general, for sociology such concepts as "state," "association," "feudalism," and the like, designate certain categories of human interaction. Hence it is the task of sociology to reduce these concepts to "understandable" action, that is, without exception, to the actions of participating individual men. [Weber 1958a, p. 55]

This Weberian rationale for an interpretative sociology has important implications for the question of whether a value-free social science is possible, and it also raises a number of methodological questions. But the important point to emphasize in the present discussion is that organization theorists are cognitively and epistemologically bound by the same rules, possibilities, and limitations as the persons whose actions they are trying to explain. If we see theorists as trying to make sense of the social world by reducing it to generalities, rules, and abstractions, the Weberian assumptions force us to recognize that this process is the same one that goes on as Everyman attempts to make sense of his world in ideational terms. If Everyman's ideas, beliefs, hopes, and fears are his ideology, so also are those intellectual artifacts we call organization theories the ideology of the theorists. Human sociologists and theorists working under the assumptions of a Weberian interpretative sociology ask only that the theorists' explanations of human behavior make sense in terms of a "real"—if subjective—world in which people live and find their being. Though life itself and life in organizations is filled with contending ideologies, the quality of organization theory should clarify the process of contention—the rules and consequences of the battle. It should not constitute another position in the battle, and it should not present the view of its winning general as good, "functional," or inevitable. Too frequently in the past, organization and administrative theory has—wittingly or not—taken sides in the ideological battles of social process and presented as "theory" the views of a dominating set of values, the views of rulers, elites, and their administrators (Riffel 1977). The same criticism can be made about curriculum theory and the decision-makers who define what is to be accepted as knowledge by the schools (Young 1971).

The assumptions of interpretative social theory do not deny the biological and physical circumstances of the human condition. They merely require that we attempt to understand such conditions as people themselves do. As Goffman points out, physical and biological "facts" mean little compared to the social rituals we weave around them: "A person with carcinoma of the bladder can, if he wants, die with more social grace and propriety, more apparent inner social normalcy, than a man with a harelip can order a piece of apple pie" (Goffman 1971, p. 353, as quoted in Manning 1976, p. 21).

And for those who still resist accepting individuals and their ideas as both the focal point of social reality and its limit, George Herbert Mead's (1934) social psychology provides a rationale in which thinking becomes an internal dialectic whereby the human organism adapts to its environment. Thinking and being are thereby adaptive responses to environment, and primacy for explanation rests with the internal dialectic rather than with objective conditions. Mead's concept of the "generalized other" thus becomes an explanation of how society exists in the human mind. We now need not see man in society, but only society in man. The generalized other is thus only the part of "me" that expresses others' norms, values, and beliefs, though individuals see them as their own acts (Berlak and Berlak 1975, p. 11).

Values and Methodology

It is abundantly clear that Weber regarded value-free social science as an impossibility (Zeitlin 1973, p. 58; Eldridge 1970, pp. 11–14). So Bendix points out, "In fact, Weber made it clear that 'no science is absolutely free from presuppositions, and no science can prove its fundamental value to the man who rejects these presuppositions'"(Bendix and Roth 1971, p. 71). This article has argued the same position, as does one of Pirandello's (1954) six characters when he says: "But a fact is like a sack. . . . When it's empty it won't stand up. And in order to make it stand up you must first of all pour into it all the reasons and all the feelings which have caused it to exist" (p. 24).

Weber requires social scientists to be aware of their own values, their own assumptions. As Bendix notes, "these are minimal demands against self-deception and the deception of others"(Bendix and Roth 1971, p. 71). This view sets Weber apart from Marx who thought that correct scientific inquiry could reveal an objective social structure against which individuals' subjective meanings might be seen as "false consciousness." In this belief, Marx is apparently joined by many contemporary social scientists who regard theory as super-reality, which only the enlightened may be expected to understand.

Weber's method is to create images of reality as actors in social settings understand it and to show how action consistent with these images has consequences—expected or unexpected. Understanding comes from setting the images against each other. The images may come from different people at one point in time or from different vantage points over time. In this way Weber strives to build explanations that are both "meaningfully" and "causally" adequate. The explanations have both meaning for the actors and consistency in a logical, causal sense. The method is akin to cinematography where discrete images on film create a point of view and show why events in the action turn out as they do. But is the point of view that of the actors or of the photographer? Antonioni's film *Blow-up* presents this idea as an artistic image. In this film, a photographer who is accustomed to using his subjects as objects for his own purposes and profit sneaks up to take pictures of a couple in a park. They walk in conversation, appear to embrace briefly, and then move on. When they spot the photographer, they object to his picture-taking. He returns to his darkroom and develops the prints. What has he seen? Was it innocent love or was he witnessing a murder in progress? He "blows up" the pictures themselves, then enlarges parts of them again and again hoping that the larger prints will answer the question of what was going on. Ultimately the images must speak for themselves despite any theory that the photographer or we as different observers can hypothetically place upon them.

Nisbet highlights the strength of this method in the hands of a scholar such as Weber. In explaining the relationship between Calvinism and the capitalist temper, Weber contrasts the "paradox of the presence of a manifest capitalist spirit" in the "backwoods circumstances of eighteenth-century America and, conversely, the lack of such a spirit in affluent, bourgeois Florence." He quotes from Weber:

> Now, how could activity, which was at best ethically tolerated, turn into a calling in the sense of Benjamin Franklin? The fact to be explained historically is that the most highly capitalistic center of that time, in Florence of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, the money and capital market of all the great political Powers, this attitude was considered ethically unjustifiable, or at best to be tolerated. But in the backwoods small bourgeois circumstances of Pennsylvania in the eighteenth century, where business threatened for simple lack of money to fall back into barter, where there was hardly a sign of large enterprise, where only the earliest beginnings of banking were to be found, the same thing was considered the essence of moral conduct, even commanded in the name of duty. To

> speak here of a reflection of material conditions in the ideal superstructure would be patent nonsense. [Weber 1958b, p. 180, as quoted in Nisbet 1967, pp. 259-260]

In the study of organizations in general and of the schools in particular, Weber is usually quoted in the section on "theoretical framework" and ignored thereafter in the methodology of the study. Some empirical work on schools using other than social systems or reductionist theories are beginning to come forward (cf. Magoon 1977). Part of our difficulty in this respect comes from an ideological blind spot in recognizing research. We have so schooled ourselves to see statistically sophisticated but—in Weber's terms—meaningless studies as research that we are willing, and even eager, to accept their tiny but neatly packaged "findings" as knowledge.

We should now begin to look also at wholly new kinds of routes to knowledge about schools and organizations. The "controlled," highly empirical study is not the only road to truth about organizations. Reading—or better still—seeing Pirandello's *Six Characters in Search of an Author* (1954) and *The Balcony* (1966) by Genet may make us think of new roads to truth, as reflection upon our own life and experience might do. We should be experiencing Miss White's second-grade class with Miriam Wasserman (1974, pp. 52-58) and listening to the Schoolboys of Barbiana explain to their teacher what school is like to them (Rossi and Cole 1970). And we might ask with James Herndon (1971) why his six-year-old son going to "this good school" burst into inconsolable tears when he once forgot his homework (pp. 77-85). Or we might discover with Herndon, again, what happens when some teachers behave as though everyone in the "dumb class" can and must read (pp. 134-155).

Logic, Will, Submission, and Images of Reality

There is a logic that leads, as Wittgenstein (1961) shows us, to a perception of reality and an understanding of our lives from which there is no retreat.

> My propositions serve as elucidations in the following way: anyone who understands me eventually recognizes them as nonsensical, when he has used them—as steps—to climb up beyond them. (He must, so to speak, throw away the ladder after he has climbed up it.)
>
> He must transcend these propositions, and then he will see the world aright. [p. 151]

Wittgenstein's logic takes him ultimately to a point where logic has no meaning, to a vision of the universe akin to that found in the contemplative religions of the East. In the *Bhagavad-Gita*, Arjuna, the man of action, the administrator and warrior, lays down his weapons on the field of battle saying he can no longer do what is required of him. When rational arguments and social pressures fail to persuade Arjuna of the error in such thinking, the Lord Krishna convinces him to resume his role as leader by revealing himself in "divine manifestations," which are ordinarily unnoticed behind the "form and disguise" of everyday life (Prabhavananda and Isherwood 1971, p. 88). From this transcendental experience, Arjuna sees that living in the world is synonymous with action. The individual cannot escape doing; no more can the leader escape decisions or the agony that often goes with making them. As part of a long and beautiful invocation of life in which he enumerates the varieties of being and doing, Krishna—as the symbol of existence and action—says to Arjuna:

> I am death that snatches all: I, also, am the source of all that shall be born: I am glory, prosperity, beautiful speech, memory, intelligence, steadfastness, and forgiveness. . . .
>
> I am the dice-play of the cunning: I am the strength of the strong: I am triumph and perseverance: I am the purity of the good. . . .
>
> I am the sceptre and mastery of those who rule, the policy of those who seek to conquer: I am the silence of things secret: I am the knowledge of the knower.
>
> O Arjuna, I am the divine seed of all lives. [p. 90]

Krishna's message to leaders calls upon them to renounce the world while accepting it and acting within it. The leader, "full of compassion," must engage in action "for duty's sake only," not out of "desire for its fruits" (p. 120). So Arjuna recognizes that escape from action is impossible, except as contemplation of this truth provides it. He then picks up his arrows and his bow, saying to Krishna, "I will do your bidding" (p. 130).

Wittgenstein and the *Bhagavad-Gita* show us a vision of the world and action within it. They offer metaphors and artistic images as keys to understanding. These images are of the same kind as those hidden in the theories or models that social scientists build to explain human action. Both the images and the theories provide reservoirs of meaning for interpreting our experience. The difference between an image and a theory of reality does not lie in the claim that theory alone is open to verification by powerful and objective observation. Despite such claims, it may be doubted that social scientists ever place their theories and models in jeopardy when they appear to "test" them with the methods of positivistic, experimental science (cf. Kuhn 1962; Feyerabend 1975). In contrast, the symbols of nonrational discourse are not intended to be tested by methods of proof and, paradoxically, this independence of normal scientific truth-making gives them their interpretative power. This power comes, not through the methods of objective science, but from insight into the meaning of the symbols. Their validity comes when individuals recognize the truth that they contain. It comes when individuals accept them as giving meaning and form to their own experience. The relevance of such images to administration is simply that they may evoke the realities of being an administrator better than the rational knowledge upon which a supposed science of administration rests. These nonrational views of life and action in it will not yield to analysis by quadratic equations, much less to solution by social scientists' multivariate models that speciously compile the "facts" of existence into a benign order. There is a flaw in its thinking, which the *science* of administration must consider: the possibility that the tidy order, which its theory sees in organizations, arises simply from the view of reality that administrators find convenient to hold from their vantage points somewhere near the locus of control in a particular social system.

The question that administrative theory ignores is why individuals, whose lives are far from any point of control in organizations, usually accept and willingly fulfill the ordered lives that tradition, their jobs, and the organization prescribe for them. The individual criminal or tyrant is an understandable figure. But how can we understand those who willingly set about to design and coolly execute a Holocaust that obliterated millions of Jews, homosexuals, and many other outcasts from a society that otherwise manifested a tradition of artistic accomplishment, humane learning, and sensitivity? How can ordinary individuals push the bomb release buttons that, in one evening, would burn Dresden and all its inhabitants to a crisp in an act of destruction unparalleled by any other single event in the brutal history of war?

How can a person do any job? How can one be a teacher and make the decisions that strike deeply into the lives of children and their parents? How can one administer a school system or any other large enterprise knowing that they inevitably contain conflicts and dilemmas and—worse—knowing that a ruthless, imperial force must be used to resolve them?

When we now consider genocide and untrammeled war upon civilians, we can readily see, in retrospect, that such deeds and all similar atrocities are wrong. The question remains, nevertheless, of why they were ever possible in the first place. From the perspective of this article, the answer comes in a somewhat surprising form. They are possible because organizations work, not in the sense of accomplishing overall objectives, but rather in the sense that organizations are nothing other than people doing and acting for whatever reasons seem adequate or desirable to them. Organizations are possible because people do, in the course of a day's work, simple acts that fulfill the will and intention of others whose vision of what should be—terrible or beautiful though that vision be—is thus made reality. Lacking their own independent visions of what to do or what to be, most individuals become what others now, or before them, have created for them. Administration thus involves an act of creation and compulsion. From all that might be, the administrator seeks to cause certain actions and events to prevail over others. The administrative act has force when people become and fulfill an ideological vision of what should be in the world. The vision acted out may be well established and noncontentious. It may stem from an ancient tradition, long venerated. Representing birth and creation, it may rest on a charismatic insight into the possibility of new social relationships among people.

Though I risk being misunderstood and may give offense as well in saying it, I must assert that there is a profound sense in which to be a teacher or principal is to become a force as violent as those at play in being a guard in a concentration camp or being a pilot of an aircraft in a fire-bombing raid. The violence in being a teacher or principal is not usually overt, though as instruments of punishment they may inflict physical pain as well. Rather, their violence is found in the quality of their relationships with others; it is personal and it is existential. Teachers and principals stand for an organization, for society—social forms that require order and regularity. They represent patterns of thinking and values that have spanned many centuries. They are symbols of knowledge and rationality. They must impose a way of being and believe that it is better than the impulsive, undisciplined, and often, unruly actions of the young. This shaping of a person's behavior according to patterns desired by another is not unique to schools; it is part of the human condition, as Laing (1967) makes clear:

> From the moment of birth, when the stone-age baby confronts the twentieth-century mother, the baby is subjected to these forces of violence, called love, as its mother and father have been, and their parents and their parents before them. . . . This enterprise is on the whole successful. By the time the new human being is fifteen or so, we are left with a being like ourselves. A half-crazed creature, more or less adjusted to a mad world. [p. 50]

This shaping and creation of the individual in intense relationships is precisely the process that occurs in organizations as people learn to bend to the will of others. For a glimpse of how this process works largely unseen in "normal" organizations, one can hardly do better than to look at organizations where the exercise of will and unquestioned submission to it are pushed to what must be points close to the limits of human tolerance.

The famous Dead Sea Scrolls suggest that the vision of the world, which those in today's cloistered, monastic orders act out, extends back 2,000 years or more, probably to that strand of Judaic thought exemplified by the Essenes and the monks of the Qumran community (McGrath 1978, p. 215). In the contemporary Christian orders, which still exemplify the values of asceticism and rejection of the secular world, the religious spend a lifetime learning acceptance of, and devotion to, "the Rule." McGrath provides a moving and powerful description of this process at work in an order of nuns that lives out the vision of extreme asceticism. The new entrant to the convent spends three years learning to be a nun under the exacting scrutiny of one woman, the Mistress of Novices.

> She it was who regulated all the neophyte's steps: how she should lift up her feet and not put them down noisily, how she should not walk on her heels, how she should not swing her arms, how she should keep her hands hidden under the folds of her dress, how she should not hold her head up too high. She it was who regulated the neophyte's words: when she should speak, to whom she should speak, about what she should speak; how quickly, how loudly, with what intonation. The neophyte learned quickly enough that she had no right of reply!

> "Mother," the term which predictably had to be used by the neophyte in addressing the Novice Mistress, could never be challenged, because "Mother" in this new world was in effect God. . . . [p. 197]

Every detail of behavior is carefully observed and controlled: "It [the Scapular] is to be folded lengthwise; the crease in the centre is to be made on the wrong side, that is, when folding, the right side [is] to be turned in. It can then be folded in two parts, not more." (p. 202). The price of failing to live the Rule is loss of self. Such failure means that the novice will be "condemned, denounced, and punished" while the "Others," who were always there "alongside everywhere," were still there, "*but differently:* Frightened eyes, averted gazes, lowered veils, and quickened steps told their own tale of desperate retreat . . ." (p. 211). Punishment of the novice who fails the Rule is fearsome to those who still strive to keep it faithfully. They will see her "banished from the public table to eat in disgrace off the floor, from the public prie-dieu to lie prostrate in shame at the chapel door, from the public lecture bench to kneel discredited at the back of the room" (p. 212).

After some period of time spent living this Rule, it is not surprising that the nuns no longer feel that their lives require submission to it; instead their lives embody the Rule. They themselves have become the Rule. Inevitably, not all novices succeed in making the transformation required of them, and the questioning of authority, which characterizes much contemporary religious thought, has weakened the ideological foundations upon which such orders rest. The example may be helpful, however, if we think how other organizations embody, in sometimes reduced intensity, the same controlling forces.

What we need to understand more of in administrative studies are the power of command, on the one hand, and the responses of obedience or rebellion on the other. What we need to know more of in studies of schools as organizations are the realities of being a teacher or administrator and their consequences in the lives of children.

We live in separate realities. But we live with each other. The line of reasoning in this article implies that we need to engage in a continuing process of discovery aimed at gaining an understanding of ourselves and of others—a process aimed at understanding social reality and its artifacts, which we call organizations. We need to move from the conviction that there is only one social reality to a recognition of the possibility that many exist. How we are to understand and appreciate these alternate perspectives as theorists and as human beings is not altogether clear. I have suggested the juxtaposition of meaning-laden, but disparate, images as a method that is both powerful and promising.

What, for example, do the Schoolboys of Barbiana tell us when they object to a teacher's complaint that their past instruction contained no "Physical Education"?

> Anyone of us could climb an oak tree. Once up there we could let go with both hands and chop off a two-hundred pound branch with a hatchet. Then we could drag it through the snow to our mother's doorstep.
>
> I heard of a gentleman in Florence who rides upstairs in his house in an elevator. But then he has bought himself an expensive gadget and pretends to row in it. You would give him an A in Physical Education. [Rossi and Cole 1970, p. 23]

Few, if any, of the ideas in this article are new. But some of them are new to me. By my standards, then, that puts them into Eleanor Duckworth's (1973) category of "wonderful ideas" that have to do with insight and experience. The importance of such ideas is simply that we have them and can use them. Piaget recounts the experience of a mathematician. As a child, he put ten pebbles in a row. He counted them left to right. Ten. He counted them right to left. Ten. "He kept rearranging and counting them until he decided that, no matter what the arrangement, he was always going to find that there were ten. Number is independent of the order of counting" (Duckworth 1973, p. 263). That this theorem is not new makes no difference to the person discovering it. What matters, in this context, is the intellectual development of the child and his freedom to have such "wonderful ideas." My concern in organization theory is that we are restricting one another's thinking by insisting on searching for universal truths that fit within a framework that is narrower than the reality it is trying to represent.

We have been caught in a trap that requires us, in the name of theory, to hold a single image up to reality and test whether it is true—or at least whether it is a "better" and more accurate representation of reality than any other image. But what is truth and falsity in social reality? If we are to understand organizations as containing multiple meanings, we must abandon the search for a single best image of them. An examination of great theorists' images of society reveals that the study of organizations can best advance by admitting multiple realities and different means of expressing them (Zeitlin 1968). A number of contemporary scholars now accept this position and argue that such a shift requires us to abandon the attempt to construct a value-free theory of social reality (Pondy and Boje n.d.). Instead, we must recognize social and organizational theories as expressions of ideology and as moral judgments about the world. Then various theoretical insights might all coexist simultaneously, since theories would no longer be "competing for the single prize of being the most-nearly-true" (Pondy and Boje n.d., p. 2). In judging theories, as we would no doubt continue to do, we would therefore recognize that we were involved in a truth-making and essentially moral task within a disciplined process of inquiry into social reality.

NOTES

1. The use of *apparently* in this sentence is deliberate and follows the logic of Wittgenstein (1961), who states in his proposition 6.36311 that it is simply "an

hypothesis that the sun will rise tomorrow." Add to this statement the propositions of Einstein's relativity, and one is forced to see that there is no single order for the events of the universe. Time in Einstein's theory becomes a fourth dimension in Newtonian space so that observers at different points in the universe will see the same events as occurring in different sequences.

2. See Blake (1931, p. 230). To explore the implications of Blake's vision for education, cf. Inglis (1975).

3. See Pirandello (1954, p. 17). The ellipses shown in this and the subsequent quotation from Pirandello appear in the translated text and presumably indicate rhythm in speech rather than omission of words.

4. The following works were among the basic writings that were available at the time of the symposium: Greenfield (1975, 1976), Griffiths (1975), Crane and Walker (1976), and Hughes (1976). Some later writings that significantly extend the debate are also worth noting: Griffiths (1977), Kendell and Byrne (1977), Greenfield (1977-1978, forthcoming), and Hobbs and Bruce (1977-1978).

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Theory about organization: a new perspective and its implications for schools

2

T.B. Greenfield

In common parlance we speak of organizations as if they were real. Neither scholar nor layman finds difficulty with talk in which organizations 'serve functions', 'adapt to their environment', 'clarify their goals' or 'act to implement policy'. What it is that serves, adapts, clarifies or acts seldom comes into question. Underlying widely accepted notions about organizations, therefore, stands the apparent assumption that organizations are not only real but also distinct from the actions, feelings and purposes of people. This mode of thought provides the platform for a long-standing debate about organizations and people. Is it organizations which oppress and harass people or is it fallible people who fail to carry out the well-intentioned aims of organizations? The debate continues on issues such as whether it is better to abolish organizations, to reshape them along more humane lines, or to train people to recognize the goals of organizations more clearly and to serve them more faithfully.

In contrast, this paper rejects the dualism which conveniently separates people and organizations; instead it argues that a mistaken belief in the reality of organizations has diverted our attention from human action and intention as the stuff from which organizations are made. As a result, theory and research have frequently set out on a false path in trying to understand organizations and have given us a misplaced confidence in our ability to deal with their problems. If we see organizations and individuals as inextricably intertwined, it may not be so easy to alter organizations, or to lead them, or to administer them without touching something unexpectedly human. More importantly, the view that people and organizations are inseparable requires us to reassess the commonly accepted claim that there exists a body of theory and principle which provides the touchstone for effective administrative action in organizations. The belief in the reality and independence of organizations permits us to separate the study of organizations from the study of people and their particular values, habits and beliefs. The common view in organization studies holds that people occupy organizations in somewhat the same way as they inhabit houses. The tenants may change but, apart from wear and tear, the basic structure remains and in some way shapes the behaviour of people within. Studies have therefore focussed largely on the variety of organizational structures and their effects upon people. These structures are usually seen as invariate over time and place, as universal forms into which individuals may move from time to time, bringing with them idiosyncrasies which colour their performance of the roles prescribed by the organization (Getzels, 1958, p. 156).

ORGANIZATIONAL SCIENCE AND THE PROFESSION OF ADMINISTRATION

The science of organization has found its way into studies of schools and influenced the training of those who are to administer schools. In this science, schools are a variety of the species organization which can be distinguished chiefly by the nature of their goals and their bureaucratic structure (Bidwell, 1965, pp. 973–4). The science of organization is, therefore, assumed to provide useful knowledge about schools even as it does about other kinds of organizations. Accepting this position, Griffiths (1964, p. 3) rejects 'the opinion that educational administration is a unique activity, differing greatly from business, military, hospital and other varieties of administration' and endorses (p. 118) a 'general theory which enables the researcher to describe, explain, and predict a wide range of human behavior within organizations'.

In a profession of administration based upon organizational science, the task of the administrator is to bring people and organizations together in a fruitful and satisfying union. In so doing, the work of the administrator carries the justification of the larger social order (Getzels, 1958, p. 156), since he works to link day-to-day activity in organizations to that social order. In schools, the administrator may be director or superintendent, principal or headmaster, department head or supervisor. Whatever their titles, their tasks are always the same. They bring people and resources together so that the goals of the organization and presumably of an encompassing social order may be met (Gregg 1957, pp. 269–70). No matter what circumstances he finds himself in, the administrator mediates between the organization and the people within it. The task is difficult; he needs help with it. As the argument runs, such help is fortunately to be found in the emerging science of organizations. Since organizations do have a human component, knowledge abour organizations is usually described as a social science. But social or not, this science like all others is seen as universal, timeless, and imperfect only in its incompleteness.

The claims for a science of organization and for a profession of administration based upon that science have in recent times made a marked impact upon education. For over two decades now, scholars have attempted to improve education by applying organization theory to the conduct of affairs in schools and by training educational administrators in that science (Culbertson and Shibles, 1973). Celebrating its emancipation from the press of immediate practical affairs (Griffiths, 1964), the field turned instead to discovery of the basic relationships and principles which underlie day-to-day concerns. The professor supplanted the practitioner as the source of valid knowledge about administration. If practitioners did not know or accept that they were no longer masters of the basic knowledge which underlay their craft, it did not matter. Even the scholar-practitioner, Chester Barnard, in introducing Simon's classic writings claimed that it was the scholar's knowledge of the 'abstract principles of structure' rather than the practitioner's knowledge of 'concrete behavior' which leads to an understanding of 'organizations of great variety' (Simon, 1957, pp. xlii–xliv). Things are not what they seem, in educational administration as in other realms of reality. We need the scientist and his theory to interpret them to us. His knowledge, though it may be incomplete and is certainly subject to improvement, has the virtue of universal applicability. Acting on this conviction, scholars in educational administration have sought to understand how organizations really work and to use this knowledge towards the improvement of educational practice.

A survey of representative writing in educational administration (see Campbell and Gregg, 1957; Halpin, 1958; Griffiths, 1964; Getzels, Lipham and Campbell, 1968; Milstein and Belasco, 1973) reveals that inquiry in this field has leaned heavily on the belief that a general science of organizations has provided the needed theoretical underpinnings for understanding schools and for the training of the administrators who are to run them. While a general theory of organizations provided the rationale for understanding schools, the sister social sciences provided the research tools and the 'sensitizing concepts' needed to identify and resolve their administrative problems (Downey and Enns, 1963; Tope *et al.*, 1965). Since this happy combination of theory and method yields an understanding of organizations as they really are, it then becomes possible to say how educational administrators may be trained to improve organizations and administrative practice within them (Culbertson *et al.*, 1973). Although the claim is seldom if ever made explicitly, this line of reasoning, linking a general theory of organizations to the training of administrators, implies that we have at hand both the theory and method which permit us to improve schools and the quality of whatever it is that goes on within them. That change in schools proceeds without assistance from an applied organization theory or, indeed, in contravention to it (Fullan, 1972), usually fails to shake our faith in such theory.

It will surely come as no surprise to anyone who examines the references cited to this point that most of them are American in origin, since it was in the United States that the movement to conceive educational administration as a social science arose in the late 1940s. A decade later the movement had taken hold in Canada and some time later in Australia and Britain. As the concept of educational administration as a profession and social science gains ever wider recognition and acceptance, it becomes appropriate to examine the theory and assumptions which underlie the field. In particular we need to ask whether the theory and assumptions still appear to hold in the settings where they were developed before they are recommended and applied to totally new settings. Such an examination is not only appropriate but essential in the face of an alternative view which sees organizations not as structures subject to universal laws but as cultural artefacts dependent upon the specific meaning and intention of people within them. This alternative view, which stems from nineteenth-century German idealism (Deutscher, 1973, p. 326), bears the awkward name phenomenology (Phillipson, 1972), though it might with equal justification be called the method of understanding, as it is in the work of Max Weber (Eldridge, 1971, p. 28). What we call the view is not important. What matters is that there exists a body of theory and assumption which runs squarely at odds with that which has provided the ideological underpinnings of educational administration as it has developed over the past two decades. The ideological conflict between these views rests on two fundamentally different ways of looking at the world. One is the established view both in the study of organizations generally and in the study of educational administration. In this paper, I will outline the alternative view and recommend its application both in organization and administrative theory.

It is surely no accident that the alternative view has its roots in European philosophy and social science. And it is at least noteworthy that this view has a current flowering in Britain, where it is exerting a strong influence in both sociology (Filmer, *et al.*, 1972; Dawe, 1970; Brittan, 1973) and in education (Young, 1971, Cosin, *et al.*, 1971). I do not wish to drive the differences in the views to the point of a spurious contrast between American and European social science. The alternative view which I will outline has its supporters in the United States too (Garfinkel, 1967; Cicourel, 1964; Louch 1966; Wilson, 1970). Two points should be made here. First, and of lesser importance, phenomenology has yet to influence the study of organizations in the United States despite the existence of a long-standing phenomenological tradition in some sociological schools of thought in that country.[2] In Britain, both theory and research on organizations reflect the phenomenological perspective (Tipton, 1973; Silverman, 1970). Second, and more important since it relates to the heart of the issue, the existence of the two competing ideologies illustrates the fundamental contention of phenomenology that there are no fixed ways for construing the social world around us. These ways are products of particular settings and circumstances rather than expressions of universal ideas and values. Our concepts of organizations must therefore rest upon the views of people in particular times and places, and any effort to understand them in terms of a single set of ideas, values and laws must be doomed to failure.

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[2] Deutscher (1973, pp. 324ff) describes these schools of thought and their connections with idealistic philosophy. He also points out (p. 325n) that those he calls the 'Harvard functionalists' make no mention of phenomenology or its proponents in their encyclopaedic history of theories of society. See Parsons *et al.* (1961).

The alternative view rejects the assumption, underlying much of organization theory, that organizations belong to a single species which behaves in predictable ways according to common laws. This view finds forceful expression in the work of Mayntz (1964), a European scholar of organizations:

> Propositions which hold for such diverse phenomena as an army, a trade union, and a university ... must necessarily be either trivial or so abstract as to tell hardly anything of interest about concrete reality ... After all, the distinct character of an organization is certainly determined, among other things, by the nature, interests, and values of those who are instrumental in maintaining it. (pp. 113–14.)

If people are inherently part of organizations, if organizations themselves are expressions of how people believe they should relate to each other, we then have good grounds to question an organization theory which assumes the universality of organizational forms and effects. This argument suggests that organizations theorists have been so busy defining the forest that they have failed to notice differences among the trees—and worse, have ignored objects in the forest that are not trees at all. It suggests, too, that an academic industry which trains administrators by disclosing to them the social-scientific secrets of how organizations work or how policy should be made indulges at best in a premature hope and at worst in a delusion.

TWO VIEWS OF SOCIAL REALITY

The conflicting views on organizations of which I have been speaking represent vastly different ways of looking at social reality and rest on sharply contrasting processes for interpreting it. These contrasts are summarized in Table 3 in which I have compared the two views and suggested how they differ with respect to a number of critical issues. Each of these issues has implications for the theory of organizations and for research undertaken in line with such theory. Necessarily then, these contrasts also have implications for a number of practical questions in the conduct of affairs in organizations. Some of these will be explored in the concluding section of this paper. Although there are no generally accepted names for identifying the two views contrasted in Table 3, it may suffice to note that the crux of the issue is whether social reality is based upon naturally existing systems or upon human invention of social forms. Social reality is usually construed as a natural and necessary order which, as it unfolds, permits human society to exist and people within it to meet their basic needs. Alternatively, social reality may be construed as images in the mind of man having no necessary or inevitable forms except as man creates them and endows them with reality and authority. In the one perspective, organizations are natural objects —systems of being which man discovers; in the other, organizations are cultural artefacts which man shapes within limits given only by his perception and the boundaries of his life as a human animal.

Table 3. Alternative Bases for Interpreting Social Reality

	What is social reality?	
Dimensions of comparison	*A natural system*	*Human invention*
Philosophical basis	Realism: the world exists and is knowable as it really is. Organizations are real entities with a life of their own.	Idealism: the world exists but different people construe it in very different ways. Organizations are invented social reality.
The role of social science	Discovering the universal laws of society and human conduct within it.	Discovering how different people interpret the world in which they live.
Basic units of social reality	The collectivity: society or organizations.	Individuals acting singly or together.
Method of understanding	Identifying conditions or relationships which permit the collectivity to exist. Conceiving what these conditions and relationships are.	Interpretation of the subjective meanings which individuals place upon their action. Discovering the subjective rules for such action.
Theory	A rational edifice built by scientists to explain human behaviour.	Sets of meanings which people use to make sense of their world and behaviour within it.
Research	Experimental or quasi-experimental validation of theory.	The search for meaningful relationships and the discovery of their consequences for action.
Methodology	Abstraction of reality, especially through mathematical models and quantitative analysis.	The representation of reality for purposes of comparison. Analysis of language and meaning.
Society	Ordered. Governed by a uniform set of values and made possible only by those values.	Conflicted. Governed by the values of people with access to power.

Table 3 *(cont.)*

Dimensions of comparison	*What is social reality?*	
	A natural system	*Human invention*
Organizations	Goal oriented. Independent of people. Instruments of order in society serving both society and the individual.	Dependent upon people and their goals. Instruments of power which some people control and can use to attain ends which seem good to them.
Organizational pathologies	Organizations get out of kilter with social values and individual needs.	Given diverse human ends, there is always conflict among people acting to pursue them.
Prescription for curing organizational ills	Change the structure of the organization to meet social values and individual needs.	Find out what values are embodied in organizational action and whose they are. Change the people or change their values if you can.

The systems notion posits an organizational force or framework which encompasses and gives order to people and events within it. The system—unseen behind everyday affairs—is real; it *is* the organization. The force of 'natural' in the descriptor is to evoke the view common in systems theory that organizational forms are shaped by powerful forces which in large measure act independently of man. The organizations so formed will be right and good, if the natural forces are allowed free play. Mayntz (1964, pp. 105, 115) has noted that such views in which an unseen organizational hand works for the greater social good are likely to be most congenial to scholars who share a faith in the ideals of the Western liberal democracies. In identifying organizations as social inventions, the alternative view identifies organization with man's image of himself and with the particular and distinctive ways in which people see the world around them and their place in it. This view is the perspective of phenomenology. In it organizations are the perceived social reality within which people make decisions and take actions which seem right and proper to them. (Greenfield, 1973, p. 557). The heart of this view is not a single abstraction called organization, but rather the varied perceptions by individuals of what they can, should, or must do in dealing with others within the circumstances in which they find themselves. It is noteworthy that this tradition—the decision-making tradition (Cyert and March, 1963; Simon, 1964) in organization theory—is frequently cited in scholarly writing, but seldom followed in analyses of organizations. This tradition, culminating currently in the creative insights of James March (1972) into organizational realities, reaches back into the work of Simon (1957; March and Simon, 1958) and thence into the work of Max Weber (trans. Gerth and Mills, 1946) and the German philosophers and sociologists of the phenomenological tradition (Deutscher, 1973, p. 327; Silverman, 1972, pp. 184–5).

What are some of the particular issues involved in the contrast between the systems and phenomenological views? These are suggested in Table 3 where the two views are compared on a number of points. In the discussion which follows, the phenomenological view is emphasized, since it is assumed that the foundations of the system view are the more familiar of the two views.

Philosophical basis

The systems view assumes that the world is knowable as it is. Although the acquisition of such knowledge requires the intervention and help of scientists, theorists and scholars, there exists an ultimate reality which may be discovered by application of the scientific method and similar forms of rational analysis. In systems theory, the prevailing image of the organization is that of an organism. Organizations exist; they are observable entities which have a life of their own. Organizations are like people, although sometimes the image is more that of the recalcitrant child rather than the mature adult. In any case, the theory endows organizations with many human properties. They have goals towards which they direct their activities; they respond and adapt to their environments. Nor can organizations escape the fate of organisms ill-adapted to their environments. Indeed, the fate of organizations depends upon their ability to adapt to an increasingly complex and turbulent environment. Following the Darwinian logic inherent in their image of the organization, systems theorists (Bennis, 1968) see small, quick-witted, democratic organizations replacing the ponderous, bureaucratic forms now expiring around us. The fact that bureaucratic organizations appear as large, robust and formidable as ever does not appear to shake belief in organizations as living entities subject to stringent laws permitting only the fittest to survive. Indeed, our belief in the living organization is likely to be so strong that we fail to notice that the systems theorists have shifted from telling us about the way organizations are to telling us how they ought to be. 'If only organizations were adapted to their environments', the argument runs, 'imagine how quickly these buraucratic forms would disappear'. In thinking about the dazzling prospect of a world in which organizations were creatures closely adapted to a benign, well-intentioned environment, we forget that the role of theory is to tell us the way things are rather than how they ought to be or how we should like them to be. Our image of the organization as an entity, as a living entity, rests upon an analogy. But we fail to draw the conclusion (Willer, 1967, p. 33) that the analogy is useless when discrepancies appear between the image and the phenomena observed.

The phenomenological view of reality contrasts sharply with that of systems theory. This view has its origin in the distinction Kant drew between the noumenal world (the world as it is) and the phenomenal world (the world as we see it). For Kant, a world of reality does indeed exist, but man can never perceive it directly; reality is always glossed over with human interpretations which themselves become the realities to which man responds. And man is always learning, always interpreting, always inventing the 'reality' which he sees about him. In popular form, the Kantian philosophy has been expressed as follows: 'Man does not create his world, but he does make it'. It therefore comes as no surprise to the phenomenologist that people are killed by 'empty' guns. But for the phenomenologist, beliefs are always of greater consequence than facts in shaping behaviour. The bullet may indeed be in the gun, but it is the individual's belief about an empty chamber which causes him idly to pull the trigger. Deutscher (1973) summarizes the phenomenological view as follows:

> The phenomenological orientation always sees reality as constructed by men in the process of thinking about it. It is the social version of Descartes' *Cogito, ergo sum*. For the phenomenologist it becomes *Cogitamus, ergo est*—we think, therefore it is! (p. 328)

The role of social science

The implications of the phenomenological view are of critical importance in shaping our views both of the social sciences and of a study of organizations founded on them, as may be seen in the contrasting positions taken by Weber and Durkheim (Bendix and Roth, 1971, pp. 286–97). For Weber, working within his 'method of understanding', 'there is no such thing as a collective personality which "acts" ', only individuals acting on their interpretations of reality. In contrast, Durkheim, convinced of an ultimate, knowable social reality, sought to eliminate the perceptions of individuals and to find 'the explanation of social life in the nature of society itself' (Bendix and Roth, 1971, p. 291). Thus Durkheim spent his life building a sociology around notions of 'elemental' forms which provide the invariable units out of which social life is built. Weber, on the other hand, explored the ideas, doctrines and beliefs with which men endowed their organizations and which provided the motivation for action within them. Durkheim's path leads to generality, abstraction and universality in the study of organizations; Weber's leads to the particularistic, the concrete, and the experience-based study of organizations. Durkheim's path leads to an asceptic study of organizations, Weber's to one which smells of reality.

The phenomenological view leads to the concept of organizations as 'invented social reality' (Greenfield, 1973, p. 556) and to the paradox that, having invented such reality, man is perfectly capable of responding to it as though it were not of his own invention (Silverman, 1970, p. 133). More basically, however, the phenomenological perspective questions the possibility of objectivity in what Weber calls 'the cultural sciences'. While it is possible for such sciences to pursue inquiry within a logically rigorous methodology and for them to take into account certain basic social facts such as where people live and what they do, it is not possible for cultural scientists to give us 'a direct awareness of the structure of human actions in all their reality' (Eldridge, 1971, p. 16). Thus the notion of discovering the ultimate laws which govern social reality becomes an ever receding fantasy which retreats as we attempt to approach it. Such bogus 'laws' as the law of supply and demand were, both for Weber and Durkheim, 'maxims for action', advice to people on how to protect their interests if they wished to be 'fair and logical' (Eldridge, 1971, p. 18). In Weber's view, then, it is impossible for the cultural sciences to penetrate behind social perception to reach objective social reality. Paradoxically, this limitation on the cultural sciences is also their strength, since it permits them to do what is never possible in the physical sciences: the cultural scientist may enter into and take the viewpoint of the actor whose behaviour is to be explained.

> We can accomplish something which is never attainable in the natural sciences, namely the subjective understanding of the action of component individuals ... We do not 'understand' the behaviour of cells, but can only observe the relevant functional relationships and generalize on the basis of these observations. (Weber, 1947, pp. 103-4)

While the cultural scientist may not discover ultimate social reality, he can interpret what people see as social reality and, indeed, he must do so according to a consistent, logical, and rigorous methodology (Eldridge, 1971, pp. 9-10). It is such a discipline for interpreting human experience which provides the science in the cultural scientists's work, not his ability to discover ultimate truths about social structure. Thus the purpose of social science is to understand social reality as different people see it and to demonstrate how their views shape the action which they take within that reality. Since the social sciences cannot penetrate to what lies behind social reality, they must work directly with man's definitions of reality and with the rules he devises for coping with it. While the social sciences do not reveal ultimate truth, they do help us to make sense of our world. What the social sciences offer is explanation, clarification and demystification of the social forms which man has created around himself. In the view of some (Dawe, 1970, p. 211), the social sciences may lead us to enlightenment and to liberation from the forces which oppress man. In the phenomenological view, these forces stem from man himself, not from abstractions which lie behind social reality and control man's behaviour within that reality.

Theory about what?

The two views give rise to opposing theories about the world and the way it works, since each sees reality in different kinds of things. Each approaches theory building from a point of view which is normative rather than descriptive. In the natural systems view, the basic reality is the collectivity; reality is in society and its organizations. Assuming the existence of an ultimate social reality, the role of theory is to say how it hangs together or how it might be changed so that it would hang together even more effectively (Merton, 1957; Etzioni, 1960). Thus functional analysis—the theory associated with the systems view—becomes a justification of the way social reality is organized rather than an explanation of it. In this view, the theory becomes more important than the research because it tells us what we can never perceive directly with our senses: it tells us the ultimate reality behind the appearance of things and it establishes a view which is essentially beyond confirmation or disproof by mere research.

The phenomenological view begins with the individual and seeks to understand his interpretations of the world around him. The theory which emerges must be grounded (Glaser and Strauss, 1967) in data from particular organizations. That these data will be glossed with the meanings and purposes of those people and places is the whole point of this philosophical view. Thus the aim of scientific investigation is to understand how that glossing of reality goes on at one time and place and to compare it with what goes on in different times and places. Similarly organizations are to be understood in terms of people's beliefs about their behaviour within them. If we are to understand organizations, we must understand what people within them think of as right and proper to do. Within this framework we would certainly not expect people everywhere to have the same views. In fact, it is the existence of differences in belief structures which provides us with the key to interpreting them. People are not likely to think of their own views as strange. Indeed it is only in contrast to other views that we come to understand our own. Theory thus becomes the sets of meanings which yield insight and understanding of people's behaviour. These theories are likely to be as diverse as the sets of human meanings and understandings which they are to explain. In the phenomenological perspective, the hope for a universal theory of organizations collapses into multifaceted images of organizations as varied as the cultures which support them.

The view of theory as arising from our understanding is expressed by Walsh (1972):

> The point about the social world is that it has been preselected and preinterpreted by its members in terms of a series of commonsense assumptions which

> constitute a taken-for-granted scheme of reference ... In this manner factual reality is conferred upon the social world by the routine interpretive practices of its members. The implication of this is that every man is a practical theorist when it comes to investigating the social world, and not just the sociologist. (p. 26)

Thus, the naturalist tries to devise general theories of social behaviour and to validate them through ever more complex research methodologies which push him further from the experience and understanding of the everyday world. The phenomenologist works directly with such experience and understanding to build his theory upon them. As Kuhn (1970) points out, our theories are not just possible explanations of reality; they are sets of instructions for looking at reality. Thus choice among theories and among approaches to theory building involves normative and—especially in the social sciences—moral questions. Choice among them is in part a matter of preference, but choice may also be made on the basis of which theories direct us to the most useful problems and which provide the most helpful insights into them.

Research and methodology

In the systems view, research is directed at confirming theory. Theory, in this view, is something which scientists build, largely from the armchair, by thinking up what must be the ultimate explanation for the phenomena observed. Contrary to accepted opinion, Kuhn (1970, p. 16) has argued that such theory is never open to disproof and serves instead as a 'consensual agreement among scientists about what procedures shall constitute scientific activity and hence which explanations will count as scientific explanations'. (Walsh, 1972, p. 25)

From the phenomenological perspective research, theory and methodology must be closely associated. Theory must arise out of the process of inquiry itself and be intimately connected with the data under investigation. In this view, the aim of theory should be explanation and clarification. Thus research and theory which fulfils this aim must depend not only upon what is being explained but also upon to whom it is explained, and with what. Louch (1966) argues this view as follows:

> Explanation, in Wittgenstein's phrase, is a family of cases joined together only by a common aim, to make something plain or clear. This suggests that a coherent account of explanation could not be given without attending to the audience to whom an explanation is offered or the source of puzzlement that requires an explanation to be given. There are many audiences, many puzzles. (p. 233)

Research in the naturalist mode is prone to use experimental methods to establish relationships among variables. The research often substitutes mathematical models for the substantive theoretical model and is satisfied if statistically significant relationships are found among the variables of the mathematical model. The aim is to relate variables x and y, usually with a host of other variables 'held constant'. Little effort is spent on determining whether x and y exist in any form which is meaningful to or has consequences for actors within a social situation. Nor is there much effort to ask whether holding one or more variables constant yields an interpretable result among those remaining. In physical systems, we can understand what it means to hold volume constant, for example, while we raise the temperature of a gas and observe the effect on pressure. But what does it mean when we come to a social system and speak, as some researchers do, of holding social class constant while we observe the effect of school resources upon achievement? Whereas the physicist manipulates materials and apparatus in specific, understandable ways, the social researcher frequently makes no intervention at all in the social system which he is attempting to explain. Instead, he does the manipulation of variables in his mind, or in the workings of his computer. Can we rely on the suggestion that if we manipulate variables in a social system, we will get the same results the researcher gets from his intellectual manipulation of them? The doubt is growing that we will not, as is apparent, for example, from critiques of school effects research (Spady, 1973, pp. 139–40) demonstrating that schools may account for a great deal or virtually nothing at all of pupil achievement, depending on which of several alternative but statistically acceptable procedures the researcher chooses for his analysis.

Phenomenologically based research, on the other hand, aims at dealing with the direct experience of people in specific situations. Therefore the case study and comparative and historical methods become the preferred means of analysis. These methods are perhaps found in their most developed form in the work Weber did in building ideal types for organizational analysis. These types should be seen as 'characterizations or impressions of ways of thought and styles of living' which permit comparison and understanding of them (Louch, 1966, p. 172). What Weber did in building these ideal types was to worm his way into the heads of bureaucrats, clerics and commercial men in order 'to discern logical connections among propositions expressing [their] beliefs about the world' (Louch, 1966, p. 173). The moral consequences of these beliefs may also be made plain and checked against 'reality'. The close connection among theory, research and ethics thus becomes obvious.

Thus an organizational theory based upon understanding rejects the emphasis which much of contemporary social science places upon quantification, more complex mathematical models, and bigger number crunchers in the shape of better and faster computers. As Burns (1967, p. 127) has pointed out, better manipulation of numbers cannot substitute for the emptiness of the concepts to which they apply. This fixation on numbers without concern for the concepts they are thought to represent leads to a sickness of social science which Sorokin has called 'quantophrenia' and which Rothkopf (1973, p. 6) likens to the *Leerlauf* reactions described by Lorenz. In these reactions, animals go through elaborate stereotyped performances for hunting or mating when no other living creature is there to see or respond to the performances.

If we move towards improved understanding in our research, we might change our image of what constitutes *the* essential research tool and supplant the computer with Weber's notion of the ideal type. An ideal type provides us with an image of a social situation at a particular time and place. We may then surround this image with others made of different organizations or of the same organization at other times. By looking at these images comparatively, by seeing them almost as the frames of a motion picture, we begin to understand our world better and to comprehend its differences and the processes of change occurring within it. This direction in theory and research leads to an investigation of language and the categories it contains for understanding the world (Bernstein, 1971a; 1971b). It leads also to an investigation of the processes (Scheff, 1973; Garfinkel, 1964) by which we negotiate with each other and so come to define what we will pay attention to in our environment and our organizations.

Society and its organizations

In the systems view, the problem of society is the problem of order. Without society and its organizations, chaos and anarchy would result. The social order is seen as a basically well-working system governed by universal values. In the phenomenological view, the organization as an entity striving to achieve a single goal or set of goals is resolved into the meaningful actions of individuals. Organizations do not think, act, have goals or make decisions. People do (Georgiou, 1973; Greenfield, 1973), but they do not all think, act and decide according to preordained goals. Thus the notion of the organization as a necessary order-maintaining instrument falls and the notion of organization as the expression of particular human ideologies takes its place. In this way, the problem of order becomes the problem of control (Dawe, 1970, p. 212). Or, to put the question otherwise, the problem is not whether order shall be maintained but rather who maintains it, how, and with what consequences. The image which this view calls to mind is the organization as a battlefield rather than the organization as an instrument of order. People strive to impose their interpretations of social reality upon others and to gain command of the organizational resources which will permit them to do so. The warfare in this battlefield usually takes the form of linguistic attack and defence, although the physical forms of warfare fit just as comfortably within the perspective.

Take as an example this exchange between a principal and a new social worker after the social worker had spent considerable time and effort counselling a student who had been persistently truant and tardy.[3]

P: It was really simpler and more effective in the old days when the truant officer just went straight to the student's home and brought him back to school.

SW: Actually, I do the work truant officers did, but I do it a different way.

P: That may be so, but we used to get results more quickly. If the students wouldn't come to school, we expelled them. They had to recognize our authority or quit school. That's what I mean by simple. Now everything is complicated. Why can't we deal with these cases without a lot of red tape?

SW: I prefer to see my work as treatment. The aim is not to wind up a case quickly but to keep the student in school and learning. And in any case, Mr Principal, legally I am the truant officer and you need my backing to expel a student for truancy.

It is surely not hard to see in this exchange a battle going on over what the job of the social worker should be and behind that a struggle over how the school should define its responsibilities to students. The issue is how the job of the social worker shall be defined and who shall control the school's power of expulsion. Each of the protagonists is inviting (and threatening) the other to accept a particular definition of the situation and the way it is proper to act within it.

The conflict view of organizations thus links up neatly with the decision-making tradition in organizational analysis. In a recent significant contribution Perrow (1972, pp. 145–76) demonstrates how this tradition, developed brilliantly by March and Simon (1958), complements the insights of Weber. A major concern of Weber was for the way in which the power of bureaucracies would be used outside the organization. March and Simon demonstrate how power may be marshalled within the organization. As Perrow points out (p. 196), the supposed plight of professionals within bureaucracies is a minor complaint compared to what others have suffered from professionals who have been able to act out their ideological beliefs through their control of organizations.

We should also be grateful to Perrow (p. 90) for pointing out the contrasts between Barnard's theory and his practice. For Barnard, (1938, pp. 46–61) organizations were by their very nature cooperative enterprises. In this respect, Barnard was a good systems theorist whose theory dealt with abstractions about organizations and not with the ideologies of those who ran them. In an astonishing case study, Barnard (1948) spoke to a group of the unemployed who had recently seen 'police clubs flying, women trampled, men knocked down' (p. 64) in the following terms:

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[3] Personal communication to the author.

> I'll be God damned if I will do anything for you on the basis that you ought to have it just because you want it, or because you organize mass meetings, or what you will. I'll do my best to do what ought to be done, but I won't give you a nickel on any other basis. (pp. 73–4)

In his commentary on this situation, Barnard makes it very clear that he realized he was in a position of conflict over ideology. But his theoretical concern lies not with the ideologies, but with his proposition that men under 'states of tension' will do what is 'utterly contrary to that which is normally observed in them' (p. 62). While he explains in detail how he won the ideological battle which gave him power to decide what the men 'ought to have', he makes no mention of his final decision. The content of decisions is not important in systems theory. However, Barnard does take pains to denigrate the ideology of the unemployed workers and their claims for better treatment. He also considers in a footnote (p. 73–4) whether a person of 'superior position' should swear in front of those of 'inferior status', and confides that 'the oath was deliberate and accompanied by hard pounding on the table'.

In this example, Barnard as theorist merely adds the notion of 'states of tension' to his earlier developed principles of cooperative action in organizations. Do these ideas tell us the significant aspects about organizational life with Chester Barnard? The phenomenologist holds that Barnard's ideology is the significant variable shaping the experience of many people in the organizations which he controlled. Without understanding the ideological issues involved in an organization, and in particular without knowing what ideology is in control, the general principles of organization mean relatively little in terms of what people experience in an organization.

Organizational pathologies and cures

The systems theorist looks for pathologies in the body of the organization itself. These stem from ill adaptations of the organization to its environment, to the ultimate goals it should serve, or to the needs of individuals. The solution to these pathologies is obvious: change the structure of the organization to improve the adaptation and thus the performance of the organization. The phenomenologist, on the other hand, sees structure as simply the reflection of human beliefs. If there are problems in organizations—and problems are certainly to be expected—they must therefore rest in conflicting beliefs held by individuals. Solutions to such problems cannot be found simply by changing structures. The root of the problem lies in people's beliefs and the ability to act upon these beliefs.

> Thus the argument that we must make organizations more liveable, more congruent with human values and motives, ignores the fact that it is one set of human motives and values which is in conflict with another set of motives and values. There is no abstract entity called organization which can be held accountable—only other people. (Schein, 1973, pp. 780–1)

Our penchant for thinking about organizations as entities, as things with a life of their own, blinds us to their complexity and to the human actions which constitute the façade which we call organization. It leads us to believe that we must change some abstract thing called 'organization' rather than the beliefs of people about what they should do and how they should behave with each other. The more closely we look at organizations, the more likely we are to find expressions of diverse human meanings. The focus of our efforts to improve organizations should not be, 'What can be done to change the structure of this organization?' but, 'Whose intentions define what is right to do among people here involved with one another?' and 'How might these intentions be changed?' The task of changing organizations depends, first, upon the varieties of reality which individuals see in existing organizations, and second, upon their acceptance of new ideas of what can or should be achieved through social action. We know little about either, but it is clear we should understand the first before we attempt to direct the second.

IMPLICATIONS

Where do the ideas based in phenomenology leave the notion of 'organization'? And what of the science that studies organizations? And where does a profession of educational administration which bases its practice on this science now find itself? In conclusion, let me briefly develop some answers to these questions and suggest some directions for future study.

1. Organizations are definitions of social reality. Some people may make these definitions by virtue of their access to power while others must pay attention to them. Organizations are mechanisms for transforming our desires into social realities. But the transforming mechanism lies within individuals. It is found in individuals striving to change their demands or beliefs into definitions of reality that others must regard as valid and accept as limitations on their actions. This notion of organizations as dependent upon the meanings and purposes which individuals bring to them does not require that all individuals share the same meaning and purposes. On the contrary, the views I am outlining here should make us seek to discover the varying meanings and objectives that individuals bring to the organizations of which they are a part. We should look more carefully too for differences in objectives between different kinds of people in organizations and begin to relate these to differences in power or access to resources. Although this concept of organization permits us to speak of the dominating demands and beliefs of some individuals, and allows us to explore how those with dominating views use the advantage of their position, we need not think of these dominating views as 'necessary', 'efficient', 'satisfying' or even 'functional', but merely as an invented social reality, which holds for a time and is then vulnerable to redefinition through changing demands

and beliefs among people. Where then may we go from here? Let me suggest some lines of development.

2. We should begin to regard with healthy scepticism the claim that a general science of organization and administration is at hand. Such theories carry with them not only culturally dependent notions of what is important in an organization but also prescriptive ideas of how study and inquiry into organizational problems should go forward. The movement toward international associations for the study of educational administration should be welcomed, but these associations should open windows on our understanding of organizations rather than propagate received notions of organization theory. If the movement can provide a comparative and critical perspective on schools and on our notions of how they should be run, the association will serve a valuable role. Since the dominant theories of organization and administration have their source in the United States, it is these ideas which should receive searching analysis before they are blindly applied in other cultural settings. In Britain, this critical examination of theory and its policy implications has already begun (Baron and Taylor, 1969; Halsey, 1972), though one is hard pressed to find similar critical examinations in other national or cultural settings.

3. Willy nilly, the world does seem to be shrinking towards the global village. Yet there are still strong forces which maintain vivid cultural distinctions within it. Despite these forces, the interests of the mass media, which the academic community seems all too ready to ape (Perrow, 1972, p. 198), directs attention more frequently to the symptoms of social problems rather than to their sources. While the mass media are usually ready with prefabricated solutions to these problems, students of organizations should doubt the utility of solutions which ignore their sources in the truly critical and powerful organizations of our societies. If we are unwilling to understand our own organizations, or if we regard acquiring such understanding as a trivial task, we should be aware that there are often others willing and waiting to apply their own preconceptions and answers to the tasks of defining the organization, identifying its problems, and prescribing solutions to them. Our own experience of our own organizations is a valuable resource. It is with this experience that the organization theorist must begin to understand the nature of organizations. Since an understanding of organizations is closely linked to control of them and to the possibility of change within them, the phenomenological perspective points to issues of crucial importance both to the theorist and to the man of practical affairs.

4. The possibility of training administrators through the study of organization theory has been seriously overestimated. Such theory does not appear to offer ready-made keys to the problems of how to run an organization. Through credentials, such training does appear to offer sound prospects for advancement within administrative systems. While

such training may increase social mobility, each society must decide whether it wishes to pursue this goal and, if it does, whether this method is the most appropriate for doing so. If training of administrators is to serve its avowed purposes, then it seems clear that the nature of the training must move in virtually the opposite direction from that advocated in recent years. That is to say, training should move away from attempts to teach a broad social science of organizations-in-general towards a familiarity with specific organizations and their problems. That the training should continue to have critical and reflective dimensions should not conflict with this redirection of training programmes. It appears essential also for training programmes to develop a much stronger clinical base than is now common in most of them. In such training, both the theoretician and the practitioner must be intimately involved.

5. Research into organizational problems should consider and begin to use the phenomenological perspective. This redirection of research should awaken interest in the decision-making tradition of organization theory and in the institutional school of organizational analysis (Perrow, 1972, pp. 177–204) with its emphasis on the *exposé* and ideological analysis of specific organizations (Bendix, 1956). In methodology, research should turn to those methods which attempt to represent perceived reality more faithfully and fully than do the present highly quantified and abstruse techniques. And researchers should avoid prescribing solutions to pressing social problems on the basis of prescriptive theory and research. For example, those who concluded on the basis of the Coleman study that the achievement of black students in American schools might be raised by integrating black and white students were dazzled by the naturalist assumption that a statistical relationship represents social reality. They therefore were led to the error or believing that social relationships may be manipulated in the same way in which variables from the research design can be manipulated. In doing so, they failed to reckon with the reaction of black students to greater integration as a 'solution' to their problems (Carlson, 1972). Indeed researchers and social scientists might consider the cultural imperialism which is frequently inherent in their recommendations for solving social problems and strive first to understand (Bernstein, 1971b, Sarason, 1971; Holbrook, 1964) the social and organizational world for which they hope to prescribe solutions.

What is needed for better research on schools is better images of what schools are and what goes on in them. 'Better' in this case means creating images of schools which reflect their character and quality and which will tell us something of what the experience of schooling is like. Since schools are made up of different people in different times and places, it is to be expected that images which reflect the experience of schooling must be many and varied. These images would be sets of 'one-sided viewpoints', as Weber called them, each throwing 'shafts of light'

(Eldridge, 1971, p. 12) upon social reality in schools.

As the natural systems have provided the dominating model for studies of organizations (Mayntz, 1964, p. 116), the image of the school as a unit of production has dominated investigations of schools (Levine, 1973; Spady, 1973). The production model of the school is a systems variant which sees the school as a set of roles and resources arranged to yield a product which conforms to predetermined goals. We are often so accustomed to this model that we fail to notice the enormous discrepancies between it and what typically goes on in schools. To begin with, most sets of official educational goals would justify schools doing virtually any good thing for the individual or the society in which he lives. Secondly, the products of school are nearly impossible to identify, if by product we mean something which is unmistakably due to the efforts of the school itself. The clearest measure of school product—the results students obtain on standardized and other kinds of tests—correspond poorly to the goals of education and are usually accounted for most readily by influences outside the school. Thus whether schools do anything to achieve a set of vague goals can never be determined within the model of the school as a unit of production.

If we shear from our image of schools the notion of overriding goals and visible products, what are we left with? The image is now that of pure process in which people strive to shape a social environment which is congenial to them and which they believe serves *their* purposes or the purposes which other people ought to have. The image of the school is now not the factory or the system but the public utility (Pincus, 1974) which produces a service which people use for their own ends. It is not surprising in this conception of the school that people involved with it—teachers, administrators, pupils, parents, etc.—have strong feelings about what services should be provided and how they should be provided. Moreover, it should be apparent that experience with the school's services leads to strong, though not necessarily universally accepted, beliefs about what kinds of service and conditions of service are good and bad and to convictions about which of them are effective and ineffective. However, lacking objective criteria to judge the relevance and validity of their claims, and lacking even a common basis of experience with the school's services, people holding these beliefs and convictions are likely to clash with others having different but equally firmly held convictions. We learn to believe in our own experience of school process and to doubt the validity of others' beliefs. In this way, the proposed model accounts both for the apparent stability of schools—their resistance to change—and for the continuing conflict about what schools are for and how they should be organized and run. It suggests as well that the path to understanding more about schools must lie through interpretations and analysis of the experience of people in schools, not through attempts to decide which structural elements of schools yield outcomes that best approximate their ultimate purposes.

6. The research advocated above and the rationale for it developed earlier in this paper does not imply only the description and analysis of subjective states. Weber is said to have advised researchers first to get the facts about the basic elements of social situations and then to move to a subjective interpretation of them (Eldridge, 1971, p. 19; Bendix and Roth, 1971, pp. 286–91). The 'facts' Weber had in mind were such matters as wages, costs of materials, the people involved, and descriptions of them in demographic terms. These are the typical resource variables which are of frequent concern in analyses of the school from the perspective of the production model. The questions usually investigated are whether the school is making effective and efficient use of its resources in pursuit of predetermined educational goals. Answers to such questions are complex, contradictory and unconvincing, as Spady (1973) has demonstrated. The reasons for such unsatisfactory outcomes are obvious when pointed out, as Gagné (1970) has done. Children do not learn from 'environments', from 'resources' or from the 'characteristics of teachers'. They learn from their specific involvement with people, things and events around them. Thus knowledge of the basic facts about a social situation is only the beginning of an understanding of it. What is needed beyond these basic facts is a knowledge of how people in a social situation construe it, what they see as its significant features, and how they act within it. Such knowledge can only come from the interpretation of particular experiences in specific situations.

In this respect, it might be useful to think of two kinds of variables in a social situation—outside and inside variables. The outside variables are those which lend themselves readily to quantification and which involve a minimum of interpretation. As has been suggested, these variables provide information about the characteristics of the people and resources found in a social situation. The inside variables are those which may only be expressed through interpretation of experience. Both kinds of variables are important, though in most organizational studies of schools, emphasis has usually fallen exclusively on the former category.

It would be helpful to replace our usual notion of the school as a system with the idea of the school as a set. Where the system idea implies preordained order and functions in the school, the notion of set leaves completely open both the definition of the elements of the school and the description of relationships among them. Defining the school as a set leaves as a problem for investigation what the elements of the situations are and what the meanings of relationships among the elements are. With such a view of the school, we might recognize both external and internal variables; as follows:

External variables. Pupil characteristics: their age, sex, home background, individual abilities and previous learning. School characteristics: building design, facilities and equipment. Classrooms: number of pupils, subject of study, methodology. Teacher characteristics: training and length of service, personality, intelligence, abilities and interests.

Internal variables. What is the quality of relationships among teachers, pupils and others in the school? What experiences do they have in terms of (a) their expectations for the environment, (b) the opportunities and problems they perceive, (c) the efforts they make to learn, help or teach, (d) their feelings of accomplishment or failure? What decisions do different people in the school make and why do they make them? How are people and situations defined and evaluated?

The variables listed above are intended to be suggestive rather than exhaustive. The final point to be made about them is that both of these major dimensions are essential for describing and understanding schools fully. In fact, some of the most revealing analyses will arise from contrasts between the school seen in terms of external variables and the school seen in terms of internal variables. That organizational theory has too frequently directed attention to the external variables and that it has presumed rather than explored their relationships to internal variables are points which have already been made at length.

7. A continued study of organizations from the perspectives of the social sciences is certainly warranted. Schools as one of the most significant of our social institutions deserve particular attention. It seems appropriate, however, for students of schools as organizations to consider the meaning of their studies and to redirect them towards investigations which increase our understanding of organizations as they are before attempts are made to change them. Paradoxically, the efforts which promise to yield the most penetrating insights into organization and the most practical strategies for improving them are those efforts (March, 1972) which deal with the way people construe organizational reality and with the moral and ethical issues involved in these construings.

If, as the phenomenologist holds, our ideas for understanding the world determine our action within it, then our ideas about the world—what really exists in it, how we should behave in it—are of the utmost importance. And if our ideas about the world are shaped by our experience, then the interpretation of experience is also of paramount importance. It is this process, the placing of meaning upon experience, which shapes what we call our organizations and it is this process which should be the focus of the organization theorist's work. And unless we wish to yield to universal forces for determining our experience, we must look to theories of organizations based upon diverse meanings and interpretations of our experience.

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3

The man who comes back through the door in the wall: discovering truth, discovering self, discovering organizations

T.B. Greenfield

We are much beholden to Machiavel and others, that write what men do, and not what they ought to do.

—*Francis Bacon,* ***The Advancement of Learning,*** *II, xxi, 9*

But men must know, that in this theatre of man's life, it is reserved only for God and angels to be lookers-on.

—*Francis Bacon,* ***The Advancement of Learning,*** *II, xx, 8*

Two things fill my mind with ever-increasing wonder and awe, the more often and the more intensely the reflection dwells on them: the starry heavens above me and the moral law within me.

—*Immanuel Kant,* ***Critique of Pure Reason,*** *conclusion*

A role is a hole, an organization is a related and orderly set of holes, and one sometimes catches a fleeting and slightly nightmarish vision of the scientific universe as a set of holes bounded and defined by other holes.[1]

—*Kenneth E. Boulding*

The basic problem in the study of organizations is that of understanding human intention and meaning. Part of the complexity in this problem is found in the observation that people can act purposefully and yet bring about consequences that are wholly unintended for themselves and for others. We live. And in living we believe, assert self, establish order around us, dominate others, or are dominated by them. Action flowing from meaning and intention weaves the fabric of social reality. I will argue, however, that this fabric is fashioned from the same thread that made the emperor's new clothes. In this perspective, we may better understand organizations if we conceive them as being an invented reality, an illusion that rests on a kind of social sleight-of-hand. It is true that organizations appear to be solid, real entities that act independently of human control and are difficult to change. Yet the paradox is that the vital spark, the dynamic of organization is made from nothing more substantial than people doing and thinking. Organizations are limited by and defined by human action. In their deepest—subjective—reality, they are simply manifestations of mind and will. While this conception of organizations does not make them easy to control or to change, it does locate organizational reality in the concreteness of individual action.

The root problems of organization thus dissolve into questions about what people do, why they do it, and whether what they do is right. Ultimately such problems become the individual's search for identity and for truth. The questions generated by these problems remain fortunately unresolved, though the human mind has posed them repeatedly and striven continually to answer them. Such questions retain their power over time. Men and women ask them in ever-new forms and then fashion answers to them. The purpose of this paper is not to argue for a particular set of answers, but rather to show that the study of organizations provides a rich source of ideas and experience for those who explore human action and would ask how we might best understand it and learn from it.

The quotations that open this article foreshadow its themes. They provide a framework that defines the ground to be worked. Much can be said within that framework. Much has already been said within it. Indeed, in setting out to explore this framework of ideas and to develop once more its meaning and implications, I am oppressed by the sense that I have said all this before and that others have said it time and time again. What I have said is a matter of record.[2] What others have said I have tried to acknowledge in my writings. Readers of this paper will see how heavily the ideas I expound are dependent upon others and upon a long-standing tradition of scholarship and philosophy. If I can do nothing else in this paper, I would like to abdicate from the role of spokesman for the Greenfield school of organization theory. It is not my school. It is not my theory—if indeed we have any basis for claiming that such theory exists. I have been speaking for the better part of a decade on behalf of other voices and will do so now again. They are voices—some contemporary, some historic, and some ancient—of those who are the foundational thinkers in subjectivist philosophy and interpretative social science. My argument has been that these voices speak to us of ideas that have been largely ignored in the pursuit of a set of universal, objective, and "scientific" propositions about organizations. The consequence of this exclusion has led to a science of organizations that is no science, to a definition of organizations that excludes much of what we want to study in them, and to a failure of methodology and technique in the face of the moral and existential questions that are imbedded in organizational life.

The reason for my writing once more on these themes is found in recent articles by Hills[3] and Willower[4] who seek to reassure their readers that a singular substantive body of theory about organizations exists and that the power and truth of this knowledge can be demonstrated by the techniques of an objective science. They and I live in different worlds—so different that I have puzzled now for some months trying to formulate a response. What is needed is a statement speaking to the many issues they raise and that yet advances a general argument. This is the argument that for several years has been troubling my mind over the questions of how organizations can best be conceived and of how inquiry into them can proceed most fruitfully.[5] When it comes to saying something about reality and describing action within it, Hills and Willower live in one world while I inhabit another. We argue from different premises and, therefore, see different facts in the world and build very different interpretations even though we may agree on occasion as to what the facts are. Observing two women standing at windows atop their ancient houses and seeing them shout at each other across the narrow street that separated them, Sydney Smith, the eighteenth-century English essayist, is said to have commented: "These women will never agree; they are arguing from different premises." But let us be serious. Weber makes the same point in arguing that

> *. . . no science is absolutely free from presupposition, and no science can prove its fundamental value to the man who rejects these presuppositions.*[6]

Both Hills and Willower live in a world where facts stand separate and independent from theories about the facts. In their world, it is possible to explain facts by theories and thereby to gain control over them. If they advance false ideas about the facts, the facts will destroy their theories and science will have made another step in its inevitable advance towards truth. In my world, the line between fact and value is at best blurred and what we see as facts is in large measure determined by ideas in our heads. Although I recognize some kind of dialectic between what we construe as fact and what we recognize as idea, it is not obvious to me that we can validate truth by means that are independent of the person seeking the truth. In a world where the thing to be known and the person knowing it are quite different from each other, it is possible to talk about an objective standard of truth that all observers can agree on. In a world where the observer and the "object of knowledge" are in some sense one, how can we distinguish between them? That is, if the knower and the known blend together, where shall we look for an objective criterion of truth? Both Hills and Willower assert (and assume) that ideas are a different sort of thing than facts. The word "empirical" rings through both their articles and it is used often to describe facts. Hills is particularly fond of the term and accuses me of the ultimate scientific sin: making "sweeping empirical generalizations about organizations"[7] without validating them. Setting aside the question of what an empirical generalization might be, I cheerfully admit that my generalizations about organizations constitute a kind of theory about them. What I am pointing to, however, is the difficulty of finding "empirical facts" that would objectively and incontrovertibly support or deny the theory. The point is that our theories create the facts that are relevant to them, and we can, therefore, only explore truth within a framework that defines what it is.

In the world of Hills and Willower, theories are ideas—and facts are something else. Facts, as they see them, are realities that lie strewn about their world as pebbles lie on the seashore. One may pick them up, wonder about them, then put them back without changing them significantly or modifying the perception that another observer may have of them. One may fit them into a pattern and explain them according to a set of objective rules for truth-making. The role of the observer and the role of the explainer are of minimal importance, since truth and explanation lie outside the observer. The creativity of the scientist is limited to that which forges a link between idea and fact. Once such a link is hypothesized, it can be tested for truthfulness; others can see the scientist's initial insight as readily as the scientist could.

The great advantage of science, in this view, is that it provides a standard of truth that has nothing to do with the scientist or any other human agency. Thus, the scientist's statements about the world have no personal element in them other than the fortuitous circumstances that cause the scientist to focus on one set of facts rather than another. There is no recognition here that a statement about the world is also a declaration of interest, intention, and will emanating from the observer. Such a notion would be totally alien in this depersonalized conception of reality that sees science as an immaculate standard for truth-making. So it is that Fred Kerlinger outlines alternative methods of knowing for readers of his respected and widely used text. Following the ideas of Charles Peirce, he defines four such methods of knowing—four ways of "fixing belief." The first three have in common a reference to human opinion whether such belief is held out of conviction, deference to others, or pure reasoning. The flaw that Peirce and Kerlinger see in such methods of determining truth is that they offer no means of adjudicating among competing claims about reality that different individuals may advance. What is needed, therefore, is a standard for truth-making that rests beyond human control, beyond the power of individuals to color or distort it. What could such a standard possibly be? Where should necessarily fallible human beings look for it? Kerlinger and Peirce find such a standard in the *method of science,* a method that they claim gives us the only means of glimpsing reality, the reality that lies "outside the scientist and his personal beliefs, perceptions, biases, values, attitudes, and emotions."[8] Peirce describes this method and its criterion of truth as follows:

> *To satisfy our doubts, ... therefore, it is necessary that a method should be found by which our beliefs may be determined by nothing human, but by some external permanency—by something upon which our thinking has no effect . . . . The method must be such that the ultimate conclusion of every man shall be the same. Such is the method of science. Its fundamental hypothesis . . . is this: There are real things, whose characters are entirely independent for our opinions about them.*[9]

It remains to be seen how men may perceive a criterion of truth that lies outside the workings of their minds and how they might express it without coloring and distorting it as they do everything else they perceive. It remains to be seen, as well, whether they would accept such a standard even if they were convinced it existed. Faced with these difficulties and the appalling prospect of a non-human standard for determining the truth of human affairs, I find it both reasonable and humane to assert the impossibility of conceiving empirical facts or generalizing ideas that the human mind had not worked upon in some way. Even God reserves His judgment on day-to-day affairs in the world; only Science presumes to tell us the ultimate reality of things short of the day of the final judgment. For similar reasons, I find it easy to recognize the impracticality of getting all men to agree upon ultimate truths.

The necessary question, then, for all scientists to face is what objective truth can mean in a world that can be perceived only subjectively. This is the world of Emmanuel Kant and of the long line of philosophers and social scientists who have followed his thought and have worked on the problems of knowing and on the difficulties of interpreting human action in a subjectively-construed reality. The thinkers in this tradition include Dilthey, Hegel, Marx, Weber, Croce, Heidegger, and Schutz, among many others.[10] They work from Kant's basic propositions that the "object of reality" and the "object of knowledge" are essentially distinct and that our knowledge is human knowledge created by agents engaged in active inquiry. The impact of the knower can, therefore, never be "cleansed" from that which is known. As Bauman points out, from the time of Kant onward the knower was

> *. . . promoted from a distorting and unwanted factor of the cognitive act to a role as an indispensable condition of all knowledge. Subjectivity was shown to be inseparable from cognition; an objective knowledge, therefore, could be reached, if at all, only through this subjectivity.*[11]

Common sense tells us that we know what facts are, but as Hodgkinson points out, philosophers have been hard pressed to define what they are; they usually simply accept them as *a priori* givens. And more importantly for the social scientist and the administrator, Hodgkinson demonstrates how facts blur into values: This, he says, is a pencil in my hand; it is a fact that can be defined as a set of atomic wavicles in space-time flux; it is gold; it has been around in my life for a long time; it was given to me by a lady-love . . . and so "on and on until the factual object which *in essence is valueless* is imbued with any amount of value or worth."[12] What is science, then, if fact and value cannot be distinguished and if most of what we want to know about in a world of action is suffused with value? Even if we grant science a domain that deals in facts, that science is neutered, rendered immobile, and confined to self-delusion if it cannot relate those facts to values and deal with the questions of how one ought to behave in the world.

Though I am now well into this response to Hills and Willower, I am still puzzled as to how I can best say what I want to say. The main argument has already been sketched out, but much remains to be said. At this point it appears better for me to continue in an attempt to make a larger and more coherent argument than to answer point by point the arguments that these critics have made. It is not that I wish to ignore their points, but that I wish to re-cast them into forms that best advance my arguments. I will begin by outlining a set of themes that recur in interpretive social science and that are relevant to the analysis of organizations from the subjectivist perspective. These themes will provide the basis for some propositions that I believe offer a "new" and useful framework for the study of organizations.[13] I will then identify briefly a number of continuing problems that anyone attempting to build a substantive theory of organizations within such a framework must cope with. I identify these problems not to resolve them, but merely to indicate what they are and to suggest the kinds of answers that some thinkers have advanced to clarify them and understand them. If I am successful in achieving these purposes, I hope it will be seen that I have acknowledged and dealt with the major points argued by Hills and Willower. In conclusion, I will deal with a few of their points that warrant specific comment because they define in particularly vivid and concrete terms what this argument is about.

INTERPRETING SOCIAL REALITY: REASONING WITH ANGELS AND OTHERS

We want to know what is in the world, but our very act of inquiry into it denies us that knowledge. Bacon was right in pointing out that one cannot discover what is by arguing over what ought to be. But he and Machiavelli are wrong in thinking that what is can be detached from what we think ought to be. In separating ends and means, Machiavelli brought down upon himself later generations' judgment of him as immoral. We might better call him (and Bacon, too) poor scientists for failing to note that *is* and *ought* are intimately joined in human action. At least in explorations of social realtity, one can look exclusively at *is* in action only by holding the *ought* constant. That is to say that the social scientist or political philosopher who considers only what is in social reality must exclude from consideration what else might be under different value assumptions. Such an analyst becomes either an ideologue who denies the possibility of different values or an apologist for the values that undergird a particular manifestation of social reality. Should we rejoice or despair in this dilemma? Those who think there is (or ought to be?) only one interpretation of social reality will despair. These ideas destroy the notion of a single social reality that can be explained and controlled by piecing together the truth about it through science. Others who see man's freedom and creativity as necessarily linked to the possibility of new interpretations of reality will rejoice in the notion of an ever-evolving truth and in man's central role in its evolution.

We want to know what is in the world, but we cannot discover it without acting and bringing to bear upon the inquiry our own interests, attitudes, and values. As Bacon says, it is reserved only for God and angels to be lookers-on in the theatre of man's life. The rest of us are human, fallible, interested, and biased. Nor can we escape these limitations to look at reality unfiltered by human perspective; we can only shift our perspectives and develop the humility that is appropriate to a condition that limits human knowledge and prevents it from ever comprehending ultimate reality and from gaining complete understanding. It was Robert Burns who prayed that some power would give us the gift to see ourselves as others see us. As Aldous Huxley points out, this power would be a "salutary gift," but there is another that should be of at least equal interest both to the mature personality and to the social scientist. That is the capacity to see others as they see themselves. It is not clear, as Huxley argues, how we can gain such a perspective, especially if those we seek to understand "inhabit a radically alien universe." Huxley confines his interest largely to questions of how we might approach such alien universes—how, for example, can the sane know what it feels like to be mad and "how can we ever visit the worlds which, to Blake, to Swedenborg, to Johann Sebastian Bach, were home?"[14] The theorist, however, will recognize that the same problem occurs in organizations: how are we to understand ourselves and each other given that none of us is free from self or from action that seeks to realize the interests of self?

It was Karl Marx who first brought to the forefront what Anthony Giddens calls "the transformative capacity of human action."[15] This is the power of the individual to obtain outcomes through action and thereby to create some part of the social world that is recognized as real. Not everyone, of course, has equal powers of transformation, but all action is launched out of individual interest. Although Marx begins with the general questions of how people construct the social world around them and of how these constructions depend upon the interests of certain individuals and their powers, Giddens argues that Marx abandoned these general questions in his later and narrower focus upon class interests and the place of labor in maintaining the capitalist economy.[16] We should avoid, however, the error of Willower who confuses the ideology of present-day Marxist political systems with the insight of Marx. It was Marx who drew attention to *homo faber*, to man the producer, who creates not only things but the social world in which he lives and who shapes that world out of personal interests in it.[17] Marx also pointed out that social reality reflects the interests of certain people while it often oppresses those of other people at the same time. What we see as a necessary reality can, therefore, be re-shaped by further action that reflects other interests. In the Marxian analysis, social truth is created by the active knower; it depends on self.

The moral order lies within us. It is built into us by our experience and by the actions of others. In the subjectivist perspective, the moral order is not an "order of nature" to which the individual must adapt or suffer the consequences.[18] The moral order is not out there in the same way that nature is out there. There is no moral parallel to the law of gravity that binds all matter in its grasp. (Indeed, how could one *ever* break the law of gravity? And what would the consequences of breaking it be?) The subjectivist perspective argues, instead, that the moral order is man-made and socially maintained. Individuals who break the laws of the moral order are punished not by nature, but by other human beings and often as well by conscience. It is always clear how to break such an order and it is usually quite plain what the consequences of doing so are. At least others will make such consequences plain after the breaking of the order occurs. Because it lies within people, the moral order is not everywhere the same, and people will disagree as to what it is and as to what it ought to be. These disjunctures will often lead to further action in which people attempt to shape the moral order as they would have it. They attempt to make others act according to the moral order that is within themselves, or they act to make those suffer who fail to embody the order that they feel within themselves.

The moral order within may be experienced as a natural order without. Given the subjectivist assumptions about self and the moral order, the social order that links people together in loosely-connected common action is simply a reflection of the moral order. One cannot study the social order, therefore, without studying also the self, its values, conditions of creativity and power, and considerations of what ought to be. How is it possible, then, to scientize the study of organizations, that are but the reflection of an inner order? One may treat them as the starry skies, as an external objective order. But Kant and the long tradition of thought following him will argue that such science can never distinguish reflection from reality. Only by turning towards the source of light we know, towards man himself, can science begin to understand the complexity and the ambiguity that forms that reality. Can we ever split ends and means, subject and object? If not, we must turn back in studying organizations to the place where ends and means are conceived and brought together, where subjects create objects. In exploring organizations, we must turn back to *homo faber*, back to the mind of man that creates, wills, and acts.

The closer one looks at the social universe, the less substantial it looks. Organizations are made by people doing and, in that sense, are insubstantial. They are based on ideas, values, and individual action. Or, as Kenneth Boulding says, they are a collection of holes bounded and defined by other holes. But people are not holes. They are actors, they do things—*for* themselves and *to* each other. People simply make the holes, put them together, and call the result life, or society, or organization. Having spun a web of meaning to make sense of the world, man is caught in it, as Weber said. The world makes no sense without the web. Man must make it, yet the web both constrains his action and makes it possible. So we can never control the web, never control life, society, or organizations, for to do so would be to control individuality and to obliterate that which distinguishes self from other, person from person. We can only seek to understand the web of meaning man lives in—that is, to understand ourselves through actions that define self, existence, and something of the history of human consciousness.

In their articles, Hills and Willower take me, and those now mostly-silent other voices that I try to speak for, to task. Our error, in their eyes, lies in a failure to see the world in scientifically objective terms, and in our denial of the utility of science as a method for understanding and controlling organizations. My reply is that they have not been paying attention to what the other voices and I have been saying. At least if they receive the message, they reject it. That lies within their prerogative to do. One may ask for reasons for the rejection, but ultimately the judgment rests on an act of belief, an act of faith in objective science as opposed to the placement of faith in human ability to create social reality and also to interpret its meaning. As far as this present exchange of views is concerned, it appears that Hills and Willower claim to have on their side not only theory and empirical facts, but also the power of science to determine objective truth. For the other side, I claim insight, perception, and unruly humanity that will not be slotted into arbitrary categories or controlled by speciously validated theories. They would overlay action in the world with a scientific and objective explanation that has universal applicability. I would seek to understand the action by working from the perspective of those involved in it and would find explanation only in the juxtaposition of those understandings and in the interpretation of them. They see science as moving us closer and closer to general truths about social reality and toward control of social action; I see science—if I may still use the term—as argument where one wants to make a point and looks for those ideas, facts, and meanings that will increase the completeness, intensity, and persuasiveness of the initial insight. We can only move from insight to insight and argue whether we are moving in the right direction. Short of the Last Judgment, we cannot hope to escape through a door in the wall of reality and thereby gain a lasting and complete view of all that is. We must be satisfied with less, but of what does that less consist?

Two approaches are open to us. We can reason logically about what lies behind the wall of reality and infer from "facts" in this world what ultimate reality is. This method applies not only to questions about the meaning of existence, but also to more mundane matters such as the nature of organizations and how they work. This is the method of science insofar as it combines logic with "empirical facts" and hopes thereby to build accurate pictures of ultimate realities and of the mechanisms that control events in the everyday world. This is also the logic of Plato, whose parable of the cave still speaks powerfully to the dilemma of knowledge that we face. He argued that we can never see things as they are, but only their shadows, for we are chained in a cave and can look only into the darkness at the flickering images cast by the true form of things as they move between the cave and the bright sun. Plato's answer to this dilemma was to place his faith in reason and logic and in those who could reason and be logical, namely, in philosophers. This is the answer also of objective science which adds only that the "empirical facts" must agree with the logic—that is, that the theory must be supported by independent data. I will not argue that this method does not work in dealing with the physical world. Clearly, it has brought both practical understanding and control. Whether this method brings ultimate knowledge and whether this method is appropriate for the interpretation of the social world are other questions.

The second approach to the problem of getting behind the wall is to stop trying to get behind it and to deal only with what is on this side of it. This approach embraces those who, in Huxley's words, would transform aspects of our experience of this world into "Artificial Paradises."[19] That is, it includes those who seek transcendence—escape through a door in the wall—by art, religion, saturnalia, drugs both artificial and natural, liquor, and tobacco. The limitation of all these doors in the wall is that they are temporary and often leave nasty side effects like hangovers and lung cancer. The person who uses such doors in the wall must always return through them unless, of course, the passage was so risky as to be fatal. What is of lasting value in this approach lies in the realization that one must still act after the artificial paradise is gone, after one has returned through the door in the wall to everyday life. While these escape hatches never lead to ultimate truth and freedom, the better of them may provide lasting insight into life on this side of the wall, or perhaps only the courage to go on with it. From temporary suspension of will, by momentary disengagement from the force of life and through liberating reflection on these drives, help arrives that somehow improves the individual and enables him to do better that which has to be done.[20] We are dealing here with nonrational ways of knowing—ways that Peirce and Kerlinger do not even recognize as ways of knowing. They are not alone in taking this attitude. Plato shared it and for this reason excluded poets and artists from the Republic. Since their knowledge was based on something other than reason and pure logic, it was suspect in that it misleads the credulous who fail to realize that poets and artists deal only in images, not in realities. But what happens if we do not reject these images and instead deal with what is around us and its relation to our ideas? In this way, we begin to direct our attention to what is. Can we be satisfied with knowing what is from reflection about it, or must it have some larger explanation that connects it to ultimate truth and transcendental realities?

Huxley is satisfied with the *is*, a concept that can be expressed in German as *Istigkeit* ("Is-ness"). He recalls his experience with the drug mescalin, commonly known as peyote, when he saw "what Adam had seen on the morning of his creation—the miracle, moment by moment, of naked existence." Asked if this perception was agreeable, Huxley still under the influence of the drug replied, "Neither agreeable nor disagreeable. It just is."[21] Such a perception could never have satisfied Plato, who would have had to look for the explanation that lies hidden behind such an experience. Plato, so Huxley argues, could never

> *. . . have seen a bunch of flowers shining with their inner light and all but quivering under the pressure of the significance with which they were charged; could never have perceived that what rose and iris and carnation so intensely signified was nothing more, and nothing less, than what they were—a transience that was yet eternal life, a perpetual perishing that was at the same time pure Being, a bundle of minute, unique particulars in which, by some unspeakable and yet self-evident paradox, was to be seen the divine source of all existence.*[22]

The choice we face is whether to interpret reality and all that we recognize as an empirical world by rational methods alone or whether to seek elements of truth also from insight, image, art, and all the ways of knowing that rely upon intuitive, self-oriented, and nonrational perception. In his exploration of what he calls "direct perception," Huxley quotes from Blake:

> *I have always found that Angels have the vanity to speak of themselves as the only wise. This they do with a confident insolence sprouting from systematic reasoning.*[23]

It is not, says Huxley, that we can do without systematic reasoning, but only that it in itself is not adequate for understanding the world. In order to remain sane, we need to revert to direct perception of the is-ness of things and to the unsystematic exploration of reality. In this way, we may bring together the inner and outer worlds into which we were born and make some sense out of life.

Are these notions consistent with a belief in science? Huxley implies that they are by bracketing the systematic reasoning of Blake's Angels with the unsystematic exploration of reality by direct perception. In taking this position he is supported by both Feyerabend and Kuhn.[24] Both of these philosophers of science agree that science moves not only on systematic reasoning but also by creative upheavals in thought where advance depends not on systematic reasoning but upon "a mixture of subterfuge, rhetoric and propaganda"[25] or, in other words, upon unsystematic reasoning. Feyerabend advances this position with particular vigor. He makes it plain that he opposes "scientism, the faith in the existence of a unique method whose application leads to exclusive 'truths' about the world."[26] In taking this position, Feyerabend can find support in no less a figure than Bridgman, who remarked that the scientific method, as far as it is a method, is nothing more than doing one's damndest with one's mind, no holds barred. Kaplan, too, finds that we can no more define "scientific method" than we can speak of "the method of baseball." He points to conformism covered by high-sounding language and to norms of scientific inquiry based on what "everybody's doing." He, therefore, denies the methodologist any role "as baseball commissioner writing the rules" or as "umpire with power to thumb an offending player out of the game."[27] Feyerabend, however, goes further and says: "There may come a time when it will be necessary to give reason a temporary advantage and when it will be wise to defend its rules to the exclusion of everything else. I do not think we are living in such a time today."[28]

To many of my colleagues in administration and organizational theory, these ideas will surely appear wild, exotic, and possibly dangerous. I would recommend to them that they read a tract Christopher Isherwood has written on yoga as a method of understanding reality. I recommend it, not as an answer to substantive questions in the study of organizations—though it may provide such insight as well—but, rather, it should be read to appreciate an attitude that may ease our acceptance of non-objective knowledge and help to break the lock that a tradition of Western, technical, means-oriented thought has used to bind our perception of the world. As James March also has argued, we have focused almost exclusively on what now works in social organizations and ignored beauty and justice as criteria for judging our models of organization.[29] "Can-we-make-the-facts-fit-our-explanation?" has been our only criterion of scientific knowledge, and so we forget the assumptions of this approach and make truth rest solely on the power of our models to predict observable, depersonalized behavior. Within such limitations, organization theorists working in seventeenth-century Salem would have focused on the readily observable behaviors of witches and striven to construct a model that would define their characteristics and sustain reliable and valid methods for identifying them. Indeed, the more advanced theorists might have recommended against the punishment or killing of witches on the grounds that such "treatments" did nothing to eradicate witchcraft as a problem. But only those theorists who rejected the prediction of witch-driven behavior as a criterion for truth in organizational reality would be led to question whether witches existed at all.

In his exploration of yogic thought Isherwood explains the mantra, prayers of constant repetition that contain "seed words" or elements of God's essence. The efficacy that Isherwood sees in such prayers acts to transform individual consciousness, not to work miracles or to satisfy personal desires. To the reader who doubts the efficacy of such prayers, he says simply, "try it," for

> *. . . no amount of mockery, or argument, will ever prove anthing to him, either way. It is like the symbolic pump handle in Tolstoy's* **A Confession**. *If you move it up and down, you may get water. If you deny that it* **is** *a pump handle and refuse even to try it, then you most certainly never will.*[30]

For those who wish to try it, the following propositions may make the pump handle for an alternative approach to the study of organizations appear more substantial and practical.

PROLEGOMENA FOR A NEW STUDY OF ORGANIZATION

These observations are offered as prefatory comments for a yet-to-be-written treatise on organizations as invented social reality. They arise from subjectivist assumptions that see knowledge as constructed by men and women in a world they did not make. The observations are stated as propositions and summarize much that has already been presented in this article. They try to forge a coherent but necessarily incomplete argument about the nature of organizations and the possibility of inquiry into them. They should be regarded as insights that are possibly helpful in speculation about organizations. As heuristic devices, they may be counted successful in the degree to which they stimulate argument, effort towards clarification of meaning, and reflection on experience. They should not be regarded as a blueprint of organizational reality or as hypotheses that can be confirmed or disconfirmed by empirical facts alone. The claim for them is only that they weave meaningfully together what some people have defined as the limits of knowledge with what others have experienced as the reality of organizations.

***Proposition 1:** That organizations are accomplished by people and people are responsible for what goes on in them.*

Organizations are not written into the natural order of things. They are the consequences of human action—now, in the past, and in the future. Let us begin, then, not with a statement about organizations but with a statement about people. Let us begin with the simple proposition that people can do many things and that one thing can be built upon another. People are by and large creative and talented, but some can do things that others cannot. The result of this creativity, this amassing of achievement and this differentiation of interest and ability, is a world of variegated textures. People do different things and live different lives. There are those who conceive the pyramids, those who are buried in them, those who drive workers to their tasks, and those who are driven to haul the blocks of stone into place. People can do many things or can be made to do them. So we have *homo faber*, man who does many things and who in doing them creates the social world and organizations around himself. An organization is a set of people caught within a definition of how they shall relate to each other. All those in the organizations are living part of their lives there and doing things because they want to or because they have to. From time to time there is a creative new definition of the social reality around us. By constantly doing, man not only creates but also re-creates. For some the organization descends and constrains like an iron cage; for others it never descends, for they are the designers of a new cage that they call not constraint but opportunity. *Homo faber:* man who makes the Parthenon, the Mona Lisa, $e = mc^2$, recombinant DNA, games of chance, laws, prisons, schools, prayers, tightrope-walking, books for learning, instruments for torture or destruction, and everything that lies between these manifestations of creativity. In making these objects and ideas, man expresses self and makes his life, social order, and organizations.

***Proposition 2:** That organizations are expressions of will, intention, and value.*

They are manifestations of people doing what they want to do or what they think they must do. Organizations are modes of being that provide frameworks for action; they are sets of instructions for living one's life. The instructions are made by people and are directed both at others and at self. One organization may be distinguished from another by asking how the modes of being vary from setting to setting—that is, by asking how the instructions for living and acting vary across groups of people who repeatedly come together and act in concert with each other or in opposition to each other. The power of organizations lies in the transformative capacity of human action. In thinking, being, and acting, people do things to themselves and to others. To understand organization requires that we understand how intention becomes action and how one person's intention and action triggers intention and action in others. Organizations are not something that controls people, but something that people control. The traditional science of organization has sought to locate and understand the mechanism of control in organizations with the hope that such understanding would enable people to control the mechanism of control. Such mechanisms are seen as separate from people; they are seen as devices whereby an independent, organizational will can be forced upon human intention. But it is individuals who intend, not organizations. There is no external mechanism out there to control people. There is no group mind that thinks for the rest of us and will have its way. It is we who must have our way or who acquiesce. The ways in which people exert will and intention and in which they restrain them are complex ways indeed. Learning to be in an organization is a matter of bending others to one's will and of being bent by others' wills.

Proposition 3: *That organizations express becoming, not being.*

There is no ultimate reality about organizations, only a state of constant flux. Organizations are at once both the products of action and its cause. We act out of past circumstances and drive towards those we intend for the future. Social realities are constantly created and re-shaped as what was becomes what is and both form what will be. In yogic thought, the Sanskrit word *Karma* also expresses this idea, as Isherwood explains:

> *A karma is a mental or physical act. It is also the consequences of that act; good, bad or mixed . . . The Law of Karma is the natural law by which our present condition is simply the product of our past thoughts and actions, and by which we are always currently engaged in creating our own future.*[31]

This notion places the responsibility for action upon self. Given that action is inescapable, there is only the choice of what to do and how to do it. And if the moral order lies within, we must act out of it and take responsibility for that action. Again, Isherwood explains how this consequence arises:

> *We cannot run away from our actions because we carry the condition with us. On the highest mountain, in the darkest cave, we must turn at last and accept the consequences of being ourselves. Only through this acceptance can we begin to evolve further. We may choose the battleground. We cannot permanently avoid the battle.*[32]

Proposition 4: *That facts do not exist except as they are called into existence by human action and interest.*

There are levels of reality that correspond to the hard objects of the physical world at one extreme and to the subjective experience of the unique, human individual at the other.[33] There are also what Schumacher calls "levels of being" that differentiate man, animals, plants, and minerals.[34] What separates man from other, lower levels of being is self-awareness. Man not only knows; he knows he knows and he reflects upon his knowledge and his action. Since the time of Newton man has been able to hope for a perfect knowledge of the world. He let us hope, in the words of Sir Karl Popper, that all reality could be understood as a clock, as a perfectly predictable mechanism with all its facts contained within a single explanation.

> *Most openminded men, and especially most scientists, thought that in the end [the new theory] would explain everything, including not only electricity and magnetism, but also clouds, and even living organisms. Thus physical determinism—the doctrine that all clouds are clocks—became the ruling faith among enlightened men; and everybody who did not embrace this new faith was held to be an obscurantist or a reactionary.*[35]

In the study of organizations and administration this hope was kept alive—at least until recently—in the search for a theory that would express and explain human action in the same way that Newton's laws of thermodynamics explain the motion of planets and thereby give us entrée into their controlling mechanism. If the action of human beings in organizations could be grasped within such a theory, then it would be possible to predict and ultimately to control human action in much the same way that we can predict and control the motion of objects in the physical world. Those who believe in human freedom and rejoice in an indeterminate world can feel only relief that such understanding and control have not been possible in human affairs. We should not forget, however, that the belief in an objective social world that closely paralleled the physical world once led us to posit the same structure in organizations—and the same possibility of understanding it through logical empiricism—as was apparent in the motion of the planets. Griffiths explains what such theory would be like and how it would enable organizational scientists to understand and control human behavior:

> *A theory of administrative behavior will make it possible to relate what now appear to be discrete acts to one another so as to make a unified concept. The great task of science has been to impose an order upon the universe. Kepler's Laws, for instance, impose a set of relationships upon the planets of the solar system. Within this framework of laws, the motions of the planets make sense, their positions can be predicted, and order is apparent to all who care to look for it. This is the great task of theory in the field of educational administration. Within a set of principles, yet to be formulated, it will be possible to recognize interrelationships among apparently discrete acts, it will be possible to predict the behavior of individuals within the organizational framework, and it will be possible to make decisions that will be directed toward the solution of problems, have clear definitions, and will contribute to the whole concept of administration. It will be more easily understood because it will use concepts that have the same meaning to all in the profession.*[36]

But we now know, says Popper in an essay entitled "Of Clouds and Clocks," that even the most precise of clocks have their cloudy aspects—that is, they rest on realities that are "irregular, disorderly, and more or less unpredictable."[37] If man cannot hope for a perfect, unclouded knowledge of the physical world, how can it ever be possible in the social world where the facts arise not only from what is out there but also from what is inside the subjective reality? Physical reality is difficult enough to understand, but as one moves through the levels of being described by Schumacher one encounters increasing complexity and variety until one reaches the level of consciousness where what exists is in significant measure dependent upon the mind that knows it. It is at this point that fact and value begin to blur and that assertions about what is dissolve into speculation. Such ideas establish their truth not by empirical validation but by philosophical analysis. The following exchange between a helpful interviewer and the taciturn Sir Karl Popper expresses this idea succinctly:

> *Interviewer: So your thesis is this: we are all practising philosophers in the sense that we all hold philosophical theories and act on them. But usually we are not aware that what we are doing is uncritically accepting the truth of a theory.*
>
> *Sir Karl: Yes.*
>
> *Interviewer: And some of the theories are true, you say, while others are not only false but harmful. And you say the real task for philosophy is to examine critically our often unconscious philosophical prejudices and to correct them where correction is needed.*
>
> *Sir Karl: Exactly.*[38]

Proposition 5: *That man acts and then will judge the action.*

Facts, whatever they are, are less important to us than our judgment of them. Most of us know, for example, that smoking causes lung cancer and yet in smoking deny that this particular "fact" applies to the existential realities of our own particular cases. To the rationalist, such behavior in the face of facts is incomprehensible. The rationalist has difficulty in *understanding* such behavior—that is, in seeing it as smokers do who regard the everyday rituals with cigarettes as a normal, natural, and even necessary part of life. What the rationalist fails to appreciate is that facts decide nothing; it is people who decide about the facts. Any administrator who foolishly sets out to base his action on facts alone will find himself swept away in the maelstrom of action created by those who will not yield their human capacity and—as they see it—their right to decide, to choose, to impose value on the world, and to assert self and will. The basic consideration in this matter is simply that *ought* cannot be derived from *is*. Facts are, but they cannot tell us what to do. As Huxley says, this realization comes as no surprise to historians who by necessity of their trade must deal with what men do, not with what reason would have them do.

> *A firm conviction of the material reality of Hell never prevented mediaeval Christians from doing what their ambition, lust, or covetousness suggested. Lung cancer, traffic*

> *accidents and the millions of miserable and misery-creating alcoholics are facts even more certain than was, in Dante's day, the fact of the Inferno. But all such facts are remote and unsubstantial compared with the near, felt fact of a craving here and now, for release or sedation, for a drink or for a smoke.*[39]

Or, one might add, for another spin by hurtling automobile through mad streets and highways to the release of a day at the office or a weekend in the country.

In education, we see this same failure of fact in the face of values when, for example, someone raises the question of what the optimum class size is. The "facts" on the matter are well known, are they not? Unfortunately for the rationalist thinker, in this realm there is enormous disagreement even as to what the facts are and even more contention in regard to their meaning. Such examples abound in education, for the basic problem on which they turn arises from the possibility of choice, decision, and action. All of these are human behaviors, however much we might wish to objectify them and scientize them. Hodgkinson points to Litchfield's classic article in the founding issue of the *Administrative Science Quarterly*, where Litchfield outlines a general theory of administration resting on a "cycle of action" triggered by decision-making that may be "rational, deliberative, discretionary, purposive" or "irrational, habitual, obligatory, random," or "any combination thereof."[40] But how can the administrator *be* logical and rational in decision-making? How can he make the decision flow from facts rather than from an attitude towards the facts or from personal values? Litchfield's answer and that of most planners and policy analysts requires the rational administrator to follow the familiar cycle that includes the steps: (1) Definition of the issue, (2) Analysis of the existing situation, (3) Calculation and delineation of alternatives, (4) Deliberation, and finally, (5) Choice. But as Hodgkinson points out, there are "depths of ambiguity" in this way of being logical. How does one deliberate, for example? Or, for that matter, how does one choose? "For to choose *is* to decide and the act of decision-making is that of deciding to choose among alternatives."[41] So Hodgkinson concludes that "the intrusion of values into the decision-making process is not merely inevitable, it is the very substance of decision."[42] So we may see that the problematics in the study of organizations lie not in the realm of fact in any case, but in that of values. And it is in the face of values that science is silent.

In the social world, facts are called into existence by an active interest, or at least they are brought into focus by an active interest and are organized by actors to make a point or to demonstrate a "truth." So it is that facts can be continually recombined, refocussed, seen from new angles, and thereby made to demonstrate new truths. This process is precisely analogous to that in which history is created. It is historians who write history, not the past and not the facts that we may see as contained in the past. So it is that Collingwood says, "Every new generation must rewrite history in its own way." Franchini says, "There is no history in itself, history of facts . . . . Facts are brought into focus solely by present life interests, and are constructed and reconstructed by them," and Croce says, "The past fact does not answer to a past interest, but to a present interest."[43] What these historians have to say about the creation of ever new histories, each one better and "more final" than the last, corresponds exactly to the process of interpretation and social truth-making that goes on in organizations. The facts of social life are subservient to what we want to say about them.

Proposition 6: *That organizations are essentially arbitrary definitions of reality woven in symbols and expressed in language.*

They are a statement to the individual how to be; they are a context defined by others for the individual and a context that individuals may define for themselves. The struggle in the stream of life is to determine which definitions are to prevail over others. The notion of organization as context can perhaps be understood by analogy with language. Such an analogy is not simply a convenient example to illustrate meaning, for it is apparent that language is at the heart of the process by which we understand reality and by which we exert control over ourselves, others, and the physical world. But language is an abstraction; it does not exist as a concrete entity. One cannot meet the English language—or any other language—face to face. It exists as a context, as a framework of meaning that makes speech possible. The same relationship exists between organization and action. Organization is the context and the possibility; action is the concrete and the specific. So we can say that language is to talk as organization is to action.[44] And the same may be said of action that is directed at others and that requires a context of meaning and understanding to make it possible.

What we refer to as structure in organization is something that is made by action and by talk and that is necessary for action and talk to occur at all. Structure exists only in concrete action and talk, but a context is necessary for that concreteness to exist. What people must assume as context for their talk and for their action *is* the organization. Giddens elaborates this point:

> *Social structures are both* ***constituted*** *by human agency, and yet at the same time are the very* ***medium*** *of this constitution. In sorting out the threads of how this happens, we can again profit initially by considering the case of language. Language exists as a 'structure', syntactical and semantic, only in so far as there are some kind of traceable consistencies in what people say, in the speech acts which they perform. . . . It is this dual aspect of structure, as both inferred from observations of human doings, and yet as also operating as a medium whereby those doings are made possible, that has to be grasped . . . .*[45]

Proposition 7: *That organizations expressed as contexts for human action can be resolved into meaning, moral order, and power.*

This trinity of organizational reality should not be understood as independent variables in a model, but rather as faces or aspects of the entity itself. Meaning—or a sense of being in a social setting and belonging to it—is fundamental to the understanding of organization. If one person asks another, "Do you want a game of tennis?" and the second replies, "I have work to do," this transaction can only be understood "by implication," that is, by knowing what "games" and "work" are and why one should take precedence over another.[47] Meaning may also be manifest in the existential realities of those who wield power in organizations and of those who suffer its application. We can find out about such meanings most readily by reflection and intuition—either our own or others'. We can perceive them in Sartre's *Words*, in *Letter to a Teacher* by the Schoolboys of Barbiana, in a nun's struggle to keep the Rule, and in Thomas Gradgrind's confrontation with Sissy Jupe, who has grown up with horses but knows them not as Gradgrind would have her know them: "Girl number twenty unable to define a horse!" said Mr. Gradgrind, for the general behoof of all the little pitchers. "Girl number twenty possessed of no facts, in reference to one of the commonest of animals!"[48]

Moral order and power are no less important faces of the organization. Description of them need not be labored further than saying that these aspects of organization are deeply imbedded in life itself. A colleague told me recently of his experience as external examiner on a thesis that explored the question of whether a two-week course could advance administrators through the stages that Kohlberg defined in moral development. The treatment failed and not even the most powerful of statistical massage applied to the data could sustain so much as a part of the initial hypotheses. "Fortunately so," we may think after reflection on the implications of a moral development that depended on technology. If moral development can be advanced, could it not also be stayed or reversed? What the theorists who launch such studies fail to realize is that the treatment that generates the moral order is life itself and life is something we have difficulty in manipulating. What we can do is describe such order and strive to understand our own part in maintaining it or in subverting it. Power is, of course, of great consequence in organizations since it has to do with the question of who holds the whip handle and who suffers the strokes of the lash or, as social scientists are wont to speak of these things, power has to do with the control of resources in the pursuit of interests. The resources so controlled may include not only money, material, technology, and symbolic honors, but also other people and their talents.

Bringing all of these elements together into a conception of organization, we may see with Anthony Giddens that

> *...the production of society is brought about by the active constituting skills of its members, but draws upon resources, and depends upon conditions, of which they are unaware or which they perceive only dimly. Three aspects of the production of interaction can be distinguished: those of the constitution of meaning, morality and relations of power.*[49]

In the production of organizations, we should be aware of what Giddens calls "asymmetries" in meaning and morality and in the power of certain people to force their meanings and moralities upon others. The study of organization should be directed at mapping these asymmetries and at understanding the meanings of people whose actions create the very entity that enables them to act.

***Proposition 8:** That there is no technology for achieving the purposes organizations are to serve.*

People can act, but what can organizations do? The individual can paint a picture, write a poem, add a column of figures, solve a quadratic equation, cook a soufflé, say prayers and sing the national anthem at the opening of school, or give orders that others accept as reason to drop napalm on civilians and defoliate forests. But do these actions achieve the goals of an organization? They cannot do so in the degree to which organizations are expressions of value and instructions for existence. Values and existence are lived, not achieved, though in our action we may try to achieve them in many ways. So, March argues that

> *. . . like truth and beauty, justice is an ideal rather than a state of existence. We do not achieve it; we pursue it. In that pursuit we accept responsibility for social myths by which we live. As critics of modern social science have easily demonstrated, models are not neutral.*[30]

Actions are one thing and organizations are something else. They are instructions to people on how to be or act, announcements as to which moral order is best, and schemes that distribute power among people in asymmetrical patterns. These instructions, announcements, and schemes are, of course, man-made, but they are set within a context, a model *for* action that permits people to deal with each other and to carry out their intentions in some fashion or other. Within organizations, people are busy with all kinds of activity directed at expressing themselves or at controlling others. When individuals come to determine how their ultimate organizational purposes are to be achieved, they are left to argue into the night, because they are discussing not what to do, but how to be. Perhaps the only option open to us in the face of this impasse is to accept responsibility for the activity we undertake, or the directions in which we think we are going, and for the "social myths we live by."

***Proposition 9:** That there is no way of training administrators other than by giving them some apocalyptic or transcendental vision of the universe and of their life on earth.*

If there is no science that explains human action within organizations as Newton's laws explain the motion of the planets and if there is no technology for determining what values are best or how they can be achieved, how then can administrators be trained and made to serve their organizations beneficially? Those who have followed the argument of this paper with sympathy may see the futility of setting out to achieve such a purpose, for we have here simply another example of a complex, value-saturated organizational goal that we simply do not know how to achieve.

We can, of course, make administrators read books, attend courses, gain graduate degrees, and obtain certificates. Does any of this do any good? Few, I hope, are brave enough to argue flatly that we already know how to train administrators, for it ought to be clear enough by now that both a science and a technology of value accomplishment are lacking. What, then, should we do for administrators if, as I think we must, we set aside most of what now passes as administrative training?

Plato's answer, as Hodgkinson points out, was to appoint philosophers as our Guardians—that is, as our leaders or administrators. Plato's case for philosophers as administrators rested on his assumption that they have some insight into the nature of truth and into the "Form of the Good." Recognizing that philosophers have a poor track record as administrators (certainly Plato's experiment with the idea failed miserably at Syracuse), Hodgkinson argues that we may be able to make administrators into philosophers, or at least move them in a direction towards philosophical understanding. "Administrative pathology," he says, "is the disease of which philosophy can be the cure."[51] But even if one accepts this goal, we are faced again with the problem of how we may achieve it.

My solution to the problem of training administrators is to recognize that administrative training is training for life and that only those who have some insight into life—its ironies, joys, and tragedies—are fit to be administrators. Again we are left with the problem: how can such insight be acted upon? Pushed to be a technologist in the face of values, I would urge what might be called the monastery solution. In this approach it would be recognized that it is life that must be understood and that life and the human spirit can take many forms and express itself in many realities. The aim, therefore, would be to place administrators-in-training in total environments that are alien to all they regard as normal and natural. We might begin the learning process by placing the novitiate in an actual monastery, perferably one carved into the cliffs of a Greek mountain where the monks are sworn to vows of total silence. Then they might spend time as bartender, bouncer, or manager of a disco, followed by service as an orderly in a mental institution, or indeed as a patient in such an institution. Enough of these "monasteries" would have to be experienced to give the would-be controller of other people's lives a sense of terror—that is, of the varied organizational realities in which people live their lives. The jolts and disorientation of this experience would be directed at making administrators take a few journeys through the doors in the wall of reality in hopes that on their return they would see life in more complex, ambiguous, and humane terms.

I cannot do better in concluding the major arguments of this article than to quote once again from Huxley:

> *Under a more realistic, a less exclusively verbal system of education than ours, every Angel (in Blake's sense of that word) would be permitted as a sabbatical treat, would be urged and even, if necessary, compelled to take an occasional trip through some chemical Door in the Wall into the world of transcendental experience. If it terrified*

> *him, it would be unfortunate but probably salutary. . . .*
>
> *Near the end of his life Aquinas experienced Infused Contemplation. Thereafter he refused to go back to work on his unfinished book. Compared with this, everything he had read and argued about and written—Aristotle and the Sentences, the Questions, the Propositions, the majestic Summas—was no better than chaff or straw. For most intellectuals such a sit-down strike would be inadvisable, even morally wrong . . . . For Angels of a lower order and with better prospects of longevity, there must be a return to the straw. But the man who comes back through the Door in the Wall will never be quite the same as the man who went out. He will be wiser but less cocksure, happier but less self-satisfied, humbler in acknowledging his ignorance yet better equipped to understand the relationship of words to things, of systematic reasoning to the unfathomable Mystery which it tries, forever vainly to comprehend.*[52]

PROBLEMATICS

I am approaching what ought to be the end of this article with the sense that I have not addressed many issues that Hills and Willower raised in their articles. I have chosen instead to address broader themes in the hope that they encompass many of the specific points these critics have raised. Whether this article serves such a purpose or not, I believe it is more important to elaborate and clarify the position I am trying to develop, that is, to strengthen that position rather than to argue simply on grounds chosen by the critics. In doing so, I recognize that the position leaves many problems unresolved. Before closing I would like to identify some of these problems and to sketch out a solution, or at least a stand, with respect to them.

The problem of self and others. If we are confined to subjective realities, how can we ever understand others? With Schutz,[53] I would simply assume that others do exist and that they live with meanings and intentions that seem sensible to them and give purpose to their lives. The problem then is to understand such meanings and intentions. With Giddens and others,[54] I believe that it is possible to mediate between frames of subjective meaning in somewhat the same way that we translate from one language to another. It *is* done, it *is* accomplished, though it is hard to lay down the rules for doing so. The method is that of hermeneutical analysis that demands as perhaps its only unequivocal rule "a respect for the authenticity of the mediated frames of meaning,"[55] that is, respect for other minds and meanings.

The problem of order. Shall we believe with Durkheim and Parsons in the *consensus universel* (a common core of human values) and in the *conscience collective* (the individual's awareness of and acceptance of those values) or shall we believe that there are different values and interests distributed among groups of people?[56] If we take the position based on common values, conflict occurs between the individual and the larger moral order. In this case, the administrator acts on behalf of that larger order against aberrant individuals who are to be coaxed or coerced into aligning themselves with it. In this case, the administrator slips easily and understandably into a mode of thought where he need no longer regard his ideas, his beliefs, his decisions, his actions as uniquely his; they represent instead the larger moral order of which he is simply the chosen instrument. If we take the position that order is negotiated by powerful interests, it is achieved by the subjugation of one interest to another and there is no ready basis for determining what moral order ought to be, the administrator is now (or ought to be) conscious of his decisions, choices, and values. Volition, interest, and intention enter the picture. I can now no longer say that my finger moved, but that *I* moved my finger.[57] It is not that my mind thinks and perceives the natural order of things, but that I think, conceive what is, and move to act upon it. Conflict, in other words, occurs between equals though their powers may be different.

The problem of truth and mind. The problem here is whether we should think that our minds can ever perceive the truth. Bauman evokes an ancient debate with Heidegger's modern image and so reminds us that we may choose between seeing the mind as a mirror or as a lamp.[58] Platonic thought sees the mind as a mirror that can reflect truth from the light ouside the cave. If this is the case, then the problem of arriving at the truth is one of polishing up the mirror so that its images become clearer and more truthful. On the other hand, if the mind is "a lamp, a radiant projector" snatched, as Heidegger saw it, from the eternal darkness, then the human mind is not a recorder of the world but the instrument of its "existential condition." It is logico-deductive, empirical science that sees the mind as a mirror and interpretative science that sees it as a lamp.

The problem of meaning and self. Should meaning be discovered or imposed? Weber made the distinction between knowledge that came from acts of *Verstehen* and those which came from acts of *Erklären*. The former rest on understanding, the latter on explanation. For Weber understanding arises from the viewpoint of the actor, whereas explanation arises from the viewpoint of the observer. In the natural sciences, he argues, we can do nothing else but explain behavior from an external vantage-point. If we seek knowledge about a falling body, a cell, or an animal, we can do nothing but impose the meaning. But in those fields that in German are called the cultural sciences *(Geisteswissenschaften)*, Weber points out that "we can accomplish something which is never attainable in the natural sciences, namely the subjective understanding of the action of component individuals."[59] Natural scientists can do nothing but impose their meaning on atoms, cells, and pigeons since these entities cannot (or do not) speak for themselves. Indeed, much of the success of physical science has rested on the imposition of arbitrary meanings that accurately predict behavior. Much of the success of the natural sciences has been also achieved by avoiding common-sense meanings and, as Francis Bacon said, by eschewing words that designate ideas "most obvious to the vulgar."[60] For Weber it is clearly possible to treat human action as behavior—that is, to treat it as though it had no meaning in itself and could not speak for itself. We might even be able to predict such behavior accurately, but we should not think that this knowledge gives us an understanding of meaningful action. The difference is that which lies between treating a child as a child and treating it as a highly complex wind-up doll. Or, as Bauman says in commenting on the work of Dilthey, it is possible to treat all reality as nature; it is possible, for example, to treat individuals as though they were trees, but trees cannot play the role of people. "Understanding is re-discovery of myself in thou; I cannot discover myself in a tree, much less can I *re*-discover myself there, as there was nothing to establish our kinship in the past."[61] The implication of this argument is that the social sciences differ fundamentally from the natural sciences; their methods and basic logic of inquiry must, therefore, also differ.

The problem of language. The question here is whether science can help us to get around the ambiguities that are bound into common language, as Bacon, and later many physical scientists, would have us do. They aspire for the certainty of mathematics and the purity of logic and find these aspirations blocked by the inconstancy of meaning in language and its dependence upon constantly shifting contexts. The opposing view holds that language is not an obstacle to understanding but our only means for reaching it. Wittgenstein makes the case for language in propositions scattered throughout his famous *Tractatus:*

> *The world is all that is the case.*
> *We picture facts to ourselves.*
> ***The limits of my language** mean the limits of my world.*
> *I am my world.*
> *The world of the happy man is a different one from that of the unhappy man.*
> *What we cannot speak about we must pass over in silence.*[62]

Given that language both limits our realities and creates them, the student of organizations has little choice but to use language as people do in all its ambiguity, inconstancy, and richness in trying to understand organizations. Language in some sense lets us understand organization and organization lets us understand language. Or, as Wittgenstein again said, "An expression has meaning only in the rivers of life."[63]

CONCLUSION

I will conclude by speaking briefly to certain points raised by Hills and Willower. I have not chosen these because they represent their most fundamental points (I hope I have spoken to those already, at least indirectly). Rather, I have chosen these points because they in some way epitomize the gulf that separates their approach to the study of organizations and that I am advocating.

Willower rests his case on the claim that science is superior to all other ways of "fixing belief" because its claims are open to disproof. In making this claim, Feyerabend would argue that Willower is advocating scientism, not science, as it is clear that he has a restricted view of what constitutes the logic of science and the methods of inquiry that are appropriate to it. I will not repeat the arguments against scientism, but only point out that Willower is taking Sir Karl Popper's position that the superiority of scientific reasoning lies in the fact that its claims are open to falsification. In his famous example, Popper argued that it may never be possible to know whether it is true to state, "All swans are white," but we may at least know such a claim is false if we find one black swan. But falsification turns out to be at least as complex a question as proof.[64] For, as Giddens says, if we dyed a swan black, would that falsify the claim? And if we crossed a swan with another bird and got a black swan-like creature, would that falsify the claim?[65] Not likely, because we already have in our minds notions of what constitutes swanness, and we use these ideas to rule out certain "empirical facts" as irrelevant or invalid. It is in this way that "normal science" arises, as both Popper and Kuhn agree. And normal science does nothing to increase our understanding; it only moves in circles to re-discover what it already knows to be true and calls the result objective knowledge. Such, I argue, is the condition we have reached in much of our scientific study of organizations.

Both Hills and Willower appear to believe that there is a clear dichotomy between the "scientific" study of organizations and any other study of them. They are prepared to take, therefore, any weakness in the argument for the other side as evidence that the scientific study of organizations can proceed in the well-established pattern of normal science and continue to make substantial progress. Hills in particular singled out my admission that much of what I have argued is not "new" and used this statement to claim that "cognitive psychologists, anthropologits, sociologists, and even political scientists" have for years all been engaged in the "attempt to construct a model of the human mind that will explain regularities in human behavior."[66] If we are to understand this statement as meaning more than the observation that social scientists take humanity as their province of study, it must imply that they are all agreed on a unified approach to that study. Not so, as I hope this article makes plain. Willower takes the same stand when he says, "I don't expect much substantive theory from the critics and I don't expect much research that will be very different from the qualitative research we already have .... However, some of them are quite earnest about the idea that they are bringing us a new paradigm, in the Kuhnian sense of the term."[67] Again we find the insistence that there *is* only one kind of theory, one kind of science. In making what he calls a "crucial" point, Willower groups all inquiry ("empirical, naturalistic, pragmatic, or positivistic") that rests on "scientific conception of knowledge" and sets it against "intuition, faith, or authority as final arbiters of truth."[68] But, like most critics working in the paradigm of hypothetico-deductive theory, he sees qualitative analysis as essentially a lower order of knowledge that must be validated through later quantitatively oriented theory and inquiry. He allows a role for qualitative methods and their "obvious strengths" only "in the production of new concepts, ideas, and hypotheses, and in the immediate and holistic character of the information presented."[69] He jokingly reports that he conducted telephone interviews with 50 school superintendents and only "barely resisted" the urge to announce a "phenomenological breakthrough." Phenomenologists would likely only smile politely at the suggestion that superintendents' "finest hours and bitterest regrets" could be gathered by a methodology totally dependent on long-distance contact, but the astonishing aspect of Willower's claim is that the two reports he contemplated making on his investigation would inevitably yield the same findings.[70] Clearly they would, if they were conducted by someone convinced that the findings *ought to be the same* because science cannot tolerate two separate and possibly contradictory truths about the same reality. Is there no ideology, therefore, in science? Are those who practice it free from commitment?

Hills claims that the value of my writings about an alternative paradigm for research on organizations lies in their "discussion-stimulating qualities,"[71] and Willower largely concurs with this judgment. I agree that the controversy has generated useful discussion, but I will continue to disagree that the controversy can now be regarded as settled and that all of us can now go back to normal science in the study of organizations and administration. Both Hills and Willower refer to qualitative research such as that by Waller, Walcott, and Cusick, but they see it all as fitting within a single paradigm of unified science. This is not the opinion of researchers such as Becker[72] nor of the many theorists and philosophers I have cited in this article. Willower limits qualitative research to the role of "furnishing striking illustrations of what life is like to particular people in school organizations."[73] He thus reserves for higher-order research the role of explanation and truth-making.

The point to be made here is that much qualitative or constructivist research stands on its own and cannot, without distorting its meaning and implications, be fitted within larger explanatory theories that see organizations as well-ordered entities that can be fitted within a single conceptual scheme or model. The work of Cicourel and Kitsuse,[74] for example, examines the role of guidance counsellors in high schools with a finely focussed lens and finds that what they do in sorting students into groups by academic ability runs quite counter to Durkheimian and Parsonian notions of the *consensus universel.* We are not dealing here with "illustrations of life in school" built around a presumed common core of values, but with insights into schools that can only be gained by shifting radically one's perspective on them. Similarly, Cusick's work can be neatly categorized as a "study of the school organization" with all the assumptions thereby involved, or one may see it as a study of the separate realities that coexist in a given social context. Why was Mrs. J. who got students deeply involved in intellectual tasks fired from her job? "Was she fired because she encouraged the kids to 'say all kinds of good little things,' as the teacher said, because she 'talked over the heads of the less sharp kids,' as the principal said, or because she failed to thank the vice-principal when he did her a favor?"[75] We may conclude that all these reasons were true, but we should also note that those who held power in the school interpreted them as meaning Mrs. J. was "unable to relate to students" and, therefore, fired her. Cusick also points out that when we look intimately at what people do in schools and find most of them "admit with apparent honesty" that their activities are massively disengaged from the overt concerns of those who run the organization, we must do more than reach for notions about formal and informal organization within a common experience of the overarching structure.[76] Such perspectives lead us towards a terrifying plunge into uncertainty—organizations as a set of holes bounded and defined by other holes—not towards the non-political, single-criterion truth of a confident and objective social science.

Ricoeur suggests that there is a "plurivocity" in social reality; it speaks to us with many voices. That "social phenomena may be *construed* in several different ways is well known by all experts in the human sciences,"[77] and we must, therefore, consider how we can arbitrate between the truths claimed by the voices. In the face of these constructions of reality, validation in the sense of logical grounding in empirical facts is not open to us. We may, however, validate interpretations by way of argument—by hermeneutical interpretation, if you wish—and thereby find that the truths of science are like those established in law and judicial action.

> *Juridical reasoning clearly shows that the procedures of validation have a polemical character. In front of the court, the plurivocity common to texts and to actions is exhibited in the form of a conflict of interpretations, and the final interpretation appears as a verdict to which it is possible to make appeal. Like legal utterances, all interpretations in the field of literary criticism and in the social sciences may be challenged, and the question "what can defeat a claim" is common to all argumentative situations. Only in the tribunal is there a moment when the procedures of appeal are exhausted . . . . Neither in literary criticism, nor in the social sciences, is there such a last word. Or, if there is any, we call that violence.*[78]

The paradigm I argue for in the exploration of social realities is certainly against overarching (Parsonian) systems of unilateral explanation; it is one that admits the many voices of truth and recognizes them as attached to self, to individuals.[79] My chief argument is against those who would fit all truth about organizations into a single, objective, non-political, self-less truth called science.

NOTES

1. K. Boulding, "Some Questions on the Measurement and Evaluation of Organization," in *The Dilemma of Organizational Society*, H. M. Ruitenbeek, ed. (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1963), pp. 133-134.
2. See "Reflections on Organization Theory and the Truths of Irreconcilable Realities," *Educational Administration Quarterly* 14 (Spring 1978): 1-23 for sources of my writing and for a review of the issues considered in this work and in the critiques of it. Published since that review are the following: "Organization Theory as Ideology," *Curriculum Inquiry* 9,2 (1979): 97-112; "Ideas versus

Data: How Can the Data Speak for Themselves?" in *Problem-Finding in Educational Administration: Trends in Research and Theory*, G. L. Immegart and W. L. Boyd, eds. (Lexington: D. C. Heath, 1979), pp. 167-190; "Research in Educational Administration in the United States and Canada," *Educational Administration* 8 (Winter 1979/80): 207-245.

3. J. Hills, "A Critique of Greenfield's 'New Perspective,'" *Educational Administration Quarterly* 16 (Winter 1980): 20-44.

4. D. J. Willower, "Contemporary Issues in Theory in Educational Administration," *Educational Administration Quarterly* 15 (Fall 1980). See also, "Ideology and Science in Organization Theory," *Educational Administration Quarterly* 15 (Fall 1979): 20-42.

5. It is a struggle, at least for me, to think about these things. I note, however, that Hill's detailed critique did not appear until six years after my delivery of the "New Perspective" paper. In choosing to address that paper alone and in making no substantial references to my later writings, Hills presumably reserves some of his fire for later battles—unless, of course, he believes the flagship of the new perspective has now been brought to bay and scuttled by her captain.

6. Max Weber quoted in R. Bendix and G. Roth, *Scholarship and Partisanship: Essays on Max Weber* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971), p. 71.

7. Hills, "A Critique," p. 42.

8. F. N. Kerlinger, *Foundations of Behavioral Research: Educational and Psychological Inquiry* (New York: Holt Rinehart and Winston, 1964), pp. 6-8.

9. C. Peirce quoted in Kerlinger, *Foundations*, p. 7.

10. See Z. Bauman, *Hermeneutics and Social Science: Approaches to Understanding* (London: Hutchinson, 1978).

11. *Ibid.*, p. 48.

12. C. Hodgkinson, *Towards a Philosophy of Administration* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1978), p. 104.

13. I write "new" to warn readers that there is complexity here. Hills (p. 43) used my acknowledgement of this complexity to suggest that what I had to say could be safely ignored because (a) others had said it before and (b) what was said could all be comfortably fitted into conventional theory and into a methodology long since fixed by normal organizational science. I grant that the ideas are not new, but deny that this admission means that those who espouse standard theory and methodology in the science of organization can therefore rest easy. What is new is that old ideas when applied to the normal science of organization call the achievements of that science seriously into question. In my view, that science can not be adequately defended simply by saying that the ideas that threaten it are old, not new. There is a new challenge to the school of thought that holds that administration can be understood from an established science of organization. That challenge can be met only by dealing substantively and adequately with the ideas and criticism offered.

14. A. Huxley, *The Doors of Perception* (Frogmore: Triad/Panther, 1960), p. 12.

15. A. Giddens, *New Rules of Sociological Method* (London: Hutchinson, 1977), p. 110.

16. *Ibid.*, pp. 99-100, 111.
17. See Willower, "Ideology and Science," p. 26 where he declares not only that Marxist theory is an ideology but that "those who employ it are usually adherents of the political persuasion." He continues to confuse this issue in the article in this volume where he refers to Marxists as "true believers" who are "antithetical to free inquiry and the free invention and testing of ideas." Such polemics serve only to blur the basic Marxist questions and to retard the exploration of how interests and power are manifested in man's construction of social reality.
18. See Giddens, *New Rules of Sociological Method*, p. 98 for a discussion of how Durkheim and Parsons stand in opposition to Weber on this point.
19. Huxley, *Doors of Perception*, p. 50.
20. The argument here deals with the connection between will and action, a linkage that I have already explored in "Organization Theory as Ideology," pp. 105-109.
21. Huxley, *Doors of Perception*, p. 15.
22. *Ibid.*, p. 15-16.
23. W. Blake, quoted in Huxley, *Doors of Perception*. p. 62.
24. P. Feyerabend, *Against Method: Outline of an Anarchistic Theory of Knowledge* (London: New Left Books, 1975); T. Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1962).
25. W. J. Broad, "Paul Feyerabend: Science and the Anarchist," *Science* 206 (2 November, 1979): 34-37.
26. *Ibid.*, p. 36.
27. A. Kaplan, *The Conduct of Inquiry: Methodology for Behavioral Science* (San Francisco: Chandler, 1964), pp. 25-27.
28. Quoted in Broad, "Paul Feyerabend," p. 37.
29. J. G. March, "Model Bias in Social Action," *Review of Educational Research* 42 (1972): 413-429.
30. C. Isherwood, *An Approach to Vedanta* (Hollywood: Vedanta Press, 1963), p. 43.
31. *Ibid.*, p. 58.
32. *Ibid.*, p. 59.
33. Hodgkinson, *Towards a Philosophy of Administration*, pp. 200-201.
34. E. F. Schumacher, *A Guide for the Perplexed* (New York: Harper Colophon Books, 1977), pp. 15-38.
35. K. R. Popper, *Objective Knowledge* (London: Oxford University Press, 1972), p. 212.
36. D. E. Griffiths, "Toward a Theory of Administrative Behavior," in *Administrative Behavior in Education*, R. F. Campbell and R. T. Gregg, eds. (New York: Harper, 1957), p. 388.
37. Popper, *Objective Knowledge*, p. 207.
38. B. Magee, *Modern British Philosophy* (St. Albans: Paladin, 1973) as quoted in Hodgkinson, *Towards a Philosophy of Administration*, p. 200.

39. Huxley, *Doors of Perception*, pp. 51-52.

40. E. H. Litchfield, "Notes on a General Theory of Administration," *Administrative Science Quarterly* 1 (June 1956): 12-14.

41. Hodgkinson, *Towards a Philosophy of Administration*, pp. 48-49.

42. *Ibid.*, p. 59.

43. These historians are quoted in Bauman, *Hermeneutics and Social Science*, pp. 42-43.

44. Giddens, *New Rules of Sociological Method*, pp. 104-126.

45. *Ibid.*, p. 119.

46. *Ibid.*, pp. 121-122.

47. The example is from P. Ziff, "What is Said," quoted in Giddens, p. 107.

48. Jean-Paul Sartre, *Words* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1967); *Letter to a Teacher*, N. Rossi and T. Cole, trans. (New York: Random House, 1970); T. B. Greenfield, "Organization Theory as Ideology," pp. 108-109; C. Dickens, *Hard Times*, with an introduction by G. B. Shaw (London: Waverly, 1912), p. 4. Shaw points out in his introduction that Dickens is here joining Marx, Carlyle, and Ruskin to rise up against our social organizations and declare "that it is not our disorder but our order that is horrible."

49. Giddens, *New Rules of Sociological Method*, p. 157.

50. March, "Model Bias," p. 414.

51. Hodgkinson, *Towards a Philosophy of Administration*, pp. 152, 170.

52. Huxley, *Doors of Perception*, pp. 63-64.

53. A. Schutz, *The Phenomenology of the Social World* (London: Heinemann, 1972).

54. See Giddens, *New Rules of Sociological Method*, pp. 144-148; and the rich review of interpretative social science in Bauman, *Hermeneutics and Social Science*.

55. Giddens, p. 145.

56. *Ibid.*, pp. 92-98.

57. *Ibid.*, p. 74 and note #3.

58. Bauman, *Hermeneutics and Social Science*, p. 153.

59. M. Weber, *The Theory of Social and Economic Organizations*, A. M. Henderson and T. Parsons, trans. (New York: Free Press, 1947), p. 103.

60. Quoted in R. Bendix, *Embattled Reason: Essays in Social Knowledge* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1970), p. 18.

61. Bauman, *Hermeneutics and Social Science*, p. 36.

62. L. Wittgenstein, *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1961), propositions 1, 2.1, 5.6, 5.63, 6.43 and 7.

63. Quoted in Giddens, p. 42.

64. See K. R. Popper, *The Logic of Scientific Discovery* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1959).

65. Giddens, *New Rules of Sociological Method*, pp. 140-141.

66. Hills, "A Critique," p. 43.

67. Willower, "Contemporary Issues," p. 17.

68. *Ibid.*, p. 8.

69. *Ibid.*, p. 11.

70. *Ibid.*, p. 17.

71. Hills, "A Critique," p. 42.

72. H. S. Becker, *Sociological Work: Method and Substance* (Chicago: Aldine, 1970).

73. Willower, "Contemporary Issues," p. 16.

74. A. V. Cicourel and J. I. Kitsuse, *The Educational Decision Makers* (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1963).

75. P. A. Cusick, *Inside High School: The Student's World* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1973), p. 37.

76. *Ibid.*, p. 176.

77. P. Ricoeur, "The Model of the Text: Meaningful Action Considered as a Text," in *Interpretive Social Science*, P. Rabinow and W. M. Sullivan, eds. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979), p. 91.

78. *Ibid.*, pp. 93-94.

79. I do not know why Hills objects so strongly in his critique (pp. 26-30, 43) to my use of the term "Harvard functionalists." It is not my term and I used it only in a footnote to my paper. His point is that I misread Parsons or, perhaps, that I don't read Parsons. On the substantive issue I agree with Eldridge, who argues that the misreading lies with Parsons and the functionalists. He shows that Parsons tried to correct Weberian methodology and its assumptions because Weber was not "enough of a positivist" and because he drew "too sharp a distintion between the natural sciences and the cultural sciences." See *Max Weber: The Interpretation of Social Reality*, J. E. T. Eldridge, ed. (London: Thomas Nelson, 1971), p. 15.

Source: T.B. Greenfield, 'The man who comes back through the door in the wall: discovering truth, discovering self, discovering organizations', *Educational Administration Quarterly*, vol. 16, no. 3, 1980, pp. 25–59

Intellectual turmoil in educational administration

4

D.E. Griffiths

The title of this paper may be an exaggeration. But if educational administration is not in a state of intellectual turmoil, it should be, because its parent, the field of organizational theory, certainly is.

I believe that Willower expressed the consensus of scholars in educational administration when he argued that theories now employed have resulted in much that is useful and that a great deal of research on these theories remains to be done.[1] I, too, would not deprecate the theoretical work of the past. Without that work there would not be any discussion of theory today. Yet, it is clear to me that virtually all of the research being done in educational administration can be characterized by what Kuhn calls "normal science," that is, research on problems derived from the now-accepted paradigm. Further, educational administration is particularly susceptible to Herda's generalization: "Criticism and the 'growth of knowledge' do not characterize the social sciences."[2] She also observed, in discussing educational administration: "Analysis and synthesis of studies and findings are lacking. Critical discussions are virtually nonexistent among the various writers advocating a need for theory in educational administration."[3] In fact, one might say that theorists in educational administration hold a view similar to that of Noel Coward who is reputed to have said, "I love criticism just so long as it's unqualified praise."

There are some signs that there is an awakening of criticism in educational administration.[4] The level and intensity of that criticism is, however, nowhere near that in the parent field of organizational theory. The central purpose of this paper is to present the major criticisms of organizational theory that pertain to educational administration as those critiques exist both in the literature and in unpublished seminar papers. I will comment on the criticisms and draw some implications for research and theory building in educational administration.

I approach this task with a certain sadness, because it is not possible to do the job without challenging virtually all of the premises that I have accepted during my career. I feel much as Perrow did when he wrote,

> *Since I am still very much a mainstream theorist, the reader should bear with me in the quite painful process of trying to think oneself out of a paradigm one has lived with, even contributed to. It is difficult to think that one's work on, say, goals or technology, while not wrong in any normal sense, is largely irrelevant in the face of notions that were dimly recognized but put aside.*[5]

Perrow's phrase "think oneself out of" is central to this paper; as a result, the paper will be awkward at times and the conclusions will be groping, not polished and positive. I have long had an uneasiness about the assumptions underlying organizational theory. While it may be only a type of face-saving for me, Perrow's comment that "notions that were dimly recognized but put aside" is apt. My book *Administrative Theory* should have been revised years ago, but I did not feel comfortable in doing so. I think that this paper justifies that discomfort.

CRITICISMS OF ORGANIZATIONAL THEORY

The criticisms of organizational theory range from the petty to the profound. I shall not dwell on the former. Both Perrow and Greenfield, for instance, seem to think that Barnard's theory of organizations as cooperative systems was somehow discounted because he once swore at a group of workers.[6] Then there are the rhetorical flashes, such as Clegg and Dunkerly's accusing the *Administrative Science Quarterly* of "hegemony" in traditional research methodology.[7] I shall present brief descriptions of substantive criticisms with comments on each and follow with a discussion of methodological and philosophical issues. The paper ends with an attempt to suggest directions for the future of theory and research in educational administration.

Demystifying Organizations

Perrow puts well what is on the minds of many critics of organizational theory in his paper "Demystifying Organizations."[8] Perrow states, "The reality being asserted in mainstream theory is that organizations are, or can be, rational instruments of announced goals,"[9] and "Deviations from these goals are due to such things as poor motivation, faulty communications, misperceived goals, poor coordination, inadequate resources, poor management or faulty structures, according to most theories."[10] Perrow then says that an alternative position is worth exploring, namely, that "announced goals are one of the least important constraints on organizational behavior. . . . Instead, organizations are resources for a variety of group interests, and the announced purposes, while they must be met to some limited degree in most cases, largely serve as legitimating devices for these interests, or a mystification of reality."[11] And, finally,

> *There is nothing novel in the view that organizations serve many functions; what may be novel is to take this view so seriously as to put it at the center of our theory, rather than leave it as a peripheral routine observation or qualifier while we vigorously explore the impact of technology on structure or leadership on productivity. . . . To complete the demystifying process means to present an alternative definition of organizations and explain how well-meaning people and institutions participate in the fiction of intended rationality in the service of official goals.*[12]

There is, in fact, a group of critics who talk about demystifying organizations, that is, putting the concept of organizations as rational instruments of announced goals at the periphery of theory and replacing it with the view that organizations serve many functions.[13] When goals are placed at the periphery and the environment and organizational participants are placed at the center, a view quite different from the goal-centered concept of organizations emerges.

Perrow argues that human-service organizations should be judged on how well they accomplish their regulatory functions, not on how well they achieve their announced goals. A second function of human-service organizations is to absorb a part of the work force of the nation; and a third function is to provide resources for other organizations.

Regarding the internal structure of human-service organizations, Perrow argues that executives are judged by the size of the organization's budget, the executive's contacts with elites, the accommodations the organization has with other organizations, and the number of programs it has. Since these factors are easy to measure, while effectiveness is very difficult to gauge, the executive acts accordingly. Turning to the workers, Perrow contends that there is sufficient evidence to conclude that neither the goals of the organization nor efficiency is what is on the workers' minds. He suggests that the workers are concerned about the retirement system, being able to pick up office supplies or food from the kitchen or furniture for their own use, a recreation center, being able to exercise some control over their own work, and being sure of having a job as long as they want one, among other things. Putting this argument in the context of higher education: professors use university offices, computers, and the like for their personal profits; they have secretaries type manuscripts; they use university stationery for consulting memoranda; and they insist on job security through tenure.

The point to keep in mind is that according to traditional organizational theory workers *must* accept the goals; if they do not, there is a pathology that must be corrected. But it is not pathological, Perrow contends, it is fundamentally characteristic that workers, including professors, use organizations for their own ends just as managers, executives, and other groups do. Perrow includes organizational theorists in this generalization, saying, "We are just another group trying to use a multi-use collectivity, getting paid to do so, and building our careers on it."[14]

The demystification argument is quite convincing. It has been my experience both as an educational administrator and as a theorist that goals are quite important to top executives and board members but of little consequence to teachers or professors. Yet, organizational theories have been based upon the perspective of top executives, with only a modicum of attention paid to the interests of lower participants. This dichotomy has been expressed through the use of the concepts of "formal" and "informal" organization. Formal organizational theory has taken goals as provided by top executives; the theory of informal organization has built upon the ways in which other organizational participants have sought to achieve their own goals, which are generally not the goals of top management. While traditional organizational theory has taken the executives' statement of goals as central, and Perrow wonders about taking the workers' and other groups' goals as central, both approaches seem wrong to me. Rather, there should be a way of describing organizations that tries to determine, not a priori but in actuality, what the particular organization is attempting to do, and, in particular, what the people in it are attempting to do.

Women, Race, and Unions

In this section, I note a number of criticisms which appear to be obvious and uncomplicated. One wonders why more attention has not been paid to the disregard for the plight of women and minorities by organizational theorists and to the existence of unions.

It is plain to an observer of organizations that women are remarkably underrepresented in the upper levels of organizations of all sorts, at least in the United States, Canada, and Western Europe. One of the few pieces of systematic research on this subject was done by Wolff, who studied women at work and women in trade unions in Britain and attempted to use organizational theory to explain her findings.[15] She concluded that women are at a disadvantage in relation to men in most organizations; that traditional organizational theory can account for little that is found in practice; and that organizational theory must be supplemented by a sociological grasp of extraorganizational influences on organizational practice in order to understand what is happening to women in organizations. Her paper argues for theory that encompasses far more of the sociocultural environment in which organizations exist.

While I have not found a study that does for the various races what Wolff has done for women, it would seem that organizational theory is unable to account for the prevailing distribution of races in organizations.

Theories of organizations have been written as though there are no unions.[16] While it is true that only about 20 percent of the work force of the United States is unionized, unions exist in major industries and have a substantial impact on all workers, unionized and nonunionized. In addition, unions have become commonplace in the public schools and have made inroads into higher education.[17] Failure to incorporate unions into organizational theories has caused the theories to be incomplete in that a major influence on the behavior of both managers and workers has been omitted.

The prevalent practice in research and theory in educational administration is to use theories and models developed in the broad field of the social sciences for the study of educational organizations. This practice has been questioned on a variety of grounds and for opposing reasons.[18] One of the cogent reasons advanced is that universities are quite different, in functional ways, from factories, corporations, governmental agencies, the military, etc. The analysis of precisely what the differences are, however, has been lacking.

Efforts to unionize major universities and colleges have generated an analysis of the professoriate in relation to the management of universities that is contrary to all known organizational theories. In an effort to overthrow the results of a collective bargaining election, Yeshiva University argued that professors are not employees under Section 2(11) of the National Labor Relations Act.[19] The United States Court of Appeals of the Second Circuit ruled that the full-time faculty at Yeshiva has management functions because it "effectively recommends" the hiring, promotions, salary, and tenure of faculty.[20] Further, the faculty has "extensive control" over standards of admission, the curriculum, the grading system, and the graduation requirements. The court said, "When faculty members have such power they are no longer simply exercising individual professional expertise. They are, in effect, substantially and pervasively operating the enterprise." The National Labor Relations Board (NLRB), the defendant in the suit, contended that the full-time faculty acts "on its own behalf and not that of the University." But the court found that the faculty "has initiated, and the administration has repeatedly accepted, major policy determinations which constitute the essence of the University's venture." The court concluded: "The faculty is the school."

Even if the Supreme Court overturns the finding of the lower court, the implications for organizational theory are clear. Theories applying to organizations such as factories cannot automatically be assumed to be descriptive of universities. If the Supreme Court upholds the Court of Appeals in its Yeshiva decision, the value of traditional organizational theories to understanding universities will be nil. As Bunzel points out in *The Wall Street Journal* of September 29, 1978: "Part of the genius of most first-rank universities is that no individual or group has full control over it. The line between management and employee is an 'alien concept' because the faculty actively participates with the administration and the governing board in looking after the best interests of the campus." In fact, the very meaning of the words *employee, administration,* and *governing board* all need redefinition. They have no meaning in first-rate universities and colleges if they are defined in reference to traditional organizational theory.

External Control of Organizations

A common theme running through much of the criticism of organizational theory is that theorists pay too little attention to the effect of the environment on the organization. Those who make this criticism recognize that most organizational theorists admit that organizations have environments and that these environments have an effect on organizational behavior, but these critics contend that the environment is the most powerful factor affecting organizational behavior. There are two approaches to this argument: the resource dependence perspective[21] and the concept of networks.[22]

The main argument of the resource dependence perspective is that organizations are controlled by environmental contingencies, or, putting it differently, by dependence upon the environment for strategic resources.[23] The contention is that because organizations are externally controlled, theories based upon internal control are of limited utility and that the behavior of an organization can be predicted more accurately from a knowledge of resource dependencies than from a knowledge of management strategies.[24]

Pfeffer and Salancik approach resource dependence by discussing how organizations survive. They survive by being effective, that is, by managing the demands of the interest groups on which the organizations depend for resources and support. There are many ways of managing demands, including giving in to them.[25] "The key to organizational survival is the ability to acquire and maintain resources."[26] "Problems arise not merely because organizations are dependent on their environment, but because their environment is not dependable."[27] The thrust of the Pfeffer and Salancik position is that organizational survival and success are not always achieved by making internal adjustments because those adjustments can be overcome by contextual variables.

In developing their argument, Pfeffer and Salancik redefine the concepts of efficiency and effectiveness. Organizational effectiveness is an *external* standard of how well an organization is meeting the demands of the various groups and organizations with which it interacts. On the other hand, efficiency is an *internal* standard of how well something is being done. The difference between the two, and how Pfeffer and Salancik view the importance of each, is illustrated by the story of Governor Ronald Reagan's curtailing the amount of money going to the California State University system. As they put it:

> *He was concerned that state university campuses, particularly Berkeley, were indoctrinating students in radical, left-wing ideas. In response to these political pressures and to forestall further budget cuts, the administrators attempted to demonstrate that they were educating students at an ever lower cost per student. Not surprisingly, this argument had little impact on the governor, indeed it missed the point of his criticism. Producing revolutionaries at a lower cost was not what the governor wanted; rather he questioned whether the universities produced anything that justified giving them state funds.*[28]

A third concept Pfeffer and Salancik used in the resource dependence perspective is that of constraint, described as whenever one response in a given situation is more probable than any other response to the situation regardless of who is acting.[29] "The concept of restraint explains why individuals account for relatively little variance in the performance and activities of organizational systems."[30]

The resource dependence perspective gives rise to an interesting way of conceptualizing the manager, who is seen as a symbol of the organization and its action. As is the practice in many fields such as sports, industry, and, to some extent, government, the manager is the person to be fired when things go wrong, because this act gives the governing board or president a feeling of control over organizational matters. (It is surprising, though, that on occasion changing managers does result in the organization doing better.) The other major function of management is to process external demands so that the organization can gain and hold the resources it needs to survive.[31]

The resource dependence perspective leads to an interesting view of change. It is certainly clear that changes in the environment bring about changes in organizations. For example, with the decrease in demand for teachers and other educational personnel, many schools of education have changed their missions and, indeed, their names in an effort to survive.[32] This has lead to the idea that one way to change an organization intentionally would be to change its environment.[33] Efforts at lobbying in Washington or in state capitals to gain resources that change the environment would be one such example.

The resource dependence criticism is particularly valid for theories in educational administration. While my theory of change, for instance, is externally centered, my theory of administration as decision making is almost completely internal.[34] The most successful theory in educational administration, Getzels-Guba's, illustrates the resource dependence criticism to the word. Following a diagram in which the "environment" is drawn as the boundary, Getzels writes, "Although the *general* model includes the five dimensions, which must be borne in mind when considering any element of social behavior, the basic *operational* model in the present analysis of administrative processes in the educational context *is composed* of these salient factors: the interaction of *role* and *personality* in the context of *value*."[35]

Resource dependence offers an alternative that should be considered. Pfeffer and Salancik do demonstrate considerable support for their approach. As Benson points out, "Much of the book [*The External Control of Organizations* by Pfeffer and Salancik] consists of empirical tests of specific propositions generated from the resource dependence perspective. . . . Separately, each study provides modest support for the tested hypotheses and for the overall perspective. Compiled in one volume, the studies provide added support and lend a high degree of plausibility to the resource dependence view."[36] While the approach is plausible, there is little evidence to support the contention that the external environment should replace internal organizational concerns at the center of organization theories.

Benson raises a fundamental problem for resource dependence.[37] Organizations' responses to external control are complicated by the relevant environments they construct for themselves. These environments are determined by differential perceptions and power of organizational components. Teachers, for instance, see the world in ways that differ from school board members or custodians, and each group, in turn, has differential power within the organization. "Thus," says Benson, "responses to the environment are not simple, direct relations of a totally rational organization to an objective set of resource dependencies."[38] Pfeffer and Salancik deal with this problem in a rather traditional way by invoking open systems theory, which would lead to a prediction that the organization would tend to establish an equilibrium with its environment.

An interesting test of the resource dependence theory might be constructed by comparing public and private universities. While most public universities receive some funds from private sources, and virtually all private universities receive financial support from federal, state, and local sources, universities at the extremes — that is, those that are most public and those that are most private — could be compared to determine if there are differences between them in goals, organizational structure and functioning, and in the ways in which participants view their organizations and behave in them.

Also prominent in the approaches to conceptualizing the external control of organizations is network theory, in which there is the contention that case studies of single organizations do not provide an adequate understanding of complex social structure in modern communities.[39] Perrow goes even further when he concludes, after an analysis of the work of Warren, Rose, and Bergunder: "As they repeatedly insist, focusing upon one organization, or a pair of organizations, would be quite misleading; only when the network is examined is the single organization placed in the proper perspective."[40]

It is being contended that in order to understand what is happening in one organization, it must be studied in relation to the organizations with which it interacts. For instance, the study of a single school without a study of its relationship to other schools or elements of the school system would conceal a great deal of what goes on in the school. The concept of coupling has been developed to describe the relations of units in systems.[41] Units can be either loosely or tightly coupled. Without exploring network theory more deeply, it is safe to say that the point is made in the literature that it is more useful to study a unit in relation to other units than in isolation.

If the only contention of the network theorists is that a single organization cannot be adequately understood unless it is studied in the context of its network, there can be little debate. If, however, the contention is that the network must be placed at the center of organization theories, then it must be said that the point has not been made in the literature. It seems that network theory will find its proper place as one of a number of commentaries on the inadequacies of traditional organizational theory.

Universality of Organizational Theories

Virtually everyone who has written on theory in educational administration has assumed that theories developed in one type of organization are useful in all other types. However, the idea that theories have universal applicability has come under scrutiny and increasing criticism. In particular, there is doubt that organizational theories are applicable automatically to higher education.

The first major statement on this issue is by Millet, who published *The Academic Community: An Essay on Organizations* in 1962, in which he developed this thesis:

> *I believe ideas drawn from business and public administration have only a very limited applicability to colleges and universities. More than this, the essential ideas about business and public administration, such as they are, may actually promote a widespread and unfortunate misunderstanding of the nature of the college and university in our society.*[42]

While Millet's thesis received little support — in fact, the literature of administration developed in the opposite direction — the occasional studies done in higher education tend to verify his argument. Hill and French, in a study on "Perceptions of the Power of Department Chairmen by Professors," concluded: "The findings reported here tend to confirm the impression of a number of students that colleges are unique kinds of organizations."[43] In the only comprehensive bibliographical analysis that I could find, Olive offers the hypothesis that existing theories of organizational behavior and administration may not be applicable to present-day universities. In support of her hypothesis, she says:

> *Governmental agencies and business corporations have an internal organization which is unlike that of the university. Among the differences mentioned are these: the goals of the university are not specific and clearly defined; the product or service produced is not tangible; the customer (student) exerts limited influence; the employees (faculty) are dedicated to their specialized fields, not to the employing institutions; and the decision-making process is diffused in a way not typical of other forms of organization. Such differences suggest the inadequacy of present theories on problems of university administration and the incontestable and urgent need for new thinking and new approaches to research in this field.*[44]

There are few empirical tests of the relevance of theoretical work in one field to another field. One such study, which did attempt to use a theoretical frame developed in industry and government to categorize New York City school personnel, found significant differences.[45] These were summarized as follows:

> *A significant distinction between Presthus'[46] and our studies, however, occurs in the fact that some two-thirds of all teachers were found to be either pupil-oriented or intellectuals. Presthus has no categories even remotely resembling these, leading us to question the wholesale and indiscriminate application of studies of business, industry, the military, and the federal government to education."[47]*

Blau's study, *The Organization of Academic Work*, offers the opposite conclusion. He attempted to determine whether academic institutions and government bureaus and private firms were homologous, that is, exhibited empirical regularities in size, differentiation of structure, and administrative structure. He concluded: "The administrative structure of academic institutions exhibits a remarkable homology with that of other institutions."[48] It may be that if one compares universities and colleges with other organizations on purely structural grounds, without studying how the structures work, they will appear to be similar. Further, the use of a particular model, in this case bureaucracy, biases the results of the research.

The only organizational theory developed exclusively from studies of educational institutions (eleven studies of universities) is by Cohen, March, and Olsen,[49] and it bears no resemblance to any of the theories now in use in educational administration. I would feel more comfortable with the Cohen, March, and Olsen formulation if I could see some clear relationship between their research and the resulting theory; nonetheless, their theoretical framework explains certain aspects of university governance. It can be summarized as follows: While most organizations can be so named some of the time, public, educational, and illegitimate ones consistently display the characteristics of organized anarchies. They operate on the basis of inconsistent and ill-defined preferences — fuzzy goals, if you will; unclear technology, that is, their own processes are not understood by their members; and fluid participation, that is, the members change frequently and devote varying amounts of time and energy to decision making, and, further, the audiences and decision makers change capriciously. Decision making in such organizations is described by the authors as the "Garbage Can Model," for obvious reasons.

There is no clear evidence to support the contention that organizational theories can automatically be considered to be general or universal. Further, the theorist in higher education administration must give very serious thought to the idea that colleges and universities have characteristics that set them apart from other organizations and, as I shall discuss later, that it is probable that higher education is not sufficiently homogeneous to constitute a set for theoretical purposes.

Marxist Critique

An increasingly popular theme of critical analysis of organizational theory is based on a Marxist view. This Marxist critique includes a number of variations called neo-Marxism, ethno-Marxism, and the Marxist dialectic. The Marxist view interprets organization life in terms of power, conflict, contradictions, crises, dialectics, and class, and this type of interpretation is the basic thrust of the Marxist critique of traditional organizational theory.

Clegg, for instance, contends that "Much of . . . organizational theory has been developed at the interface of capitalist theory and capitalist practice in the academic institutions of business."[50] Heydebrand argues that "Organizational theory, like other theories in the social sciences, has been dominated by powerful ideological forces which, taken together, have more or less successfully reproduced and legitimized the structure of capitalist society."[51] In contrast, Perrow observes that "the ethno-Marxist approach challenges conventional organization theory on almost every score."[52] Perrow uses the prefix "ethno" to catch the flavor of ethnography, ethnomethodology, phenomenology, and symbolic interaction that characterize many of the Marxist approaches. Probably the article that most clearly supports Perrow's contention is one by Brown entitled "Bureaucracy as Praxis: Toward a Political Phenomenology of Formal Organizations."[53] However, the Marxian dialectical approach is presented most clearly by Benson, who sees the organization as a concrete, multileveled phenomenon beset by contradictions that continually undermine its existing features.[54] He points out that a dialectical view is fundamentally committed to a concept of process in which theoretical attention is focused on the transformation through which one set of arrangements gives way to another: "There are four principles of dialectical analysis — social construction/production, totality, contradiction, praxis."[55] The central idea of social construction/production is that people are continually constructing the social world, which is Greenfield's major thesis.[56] The concept of totality means that any particular structure must always be seen as part of a larger, concrete whole, not as an isolated, abstract phenomenon.

Contradiction is seen by some writers, such as Heydebrand, as the central principle of the Marxist critique. What it means is that the process of social construction contains contradictions. Benson's example is "an integral part of capitalist social formations is that they are antithetical to the interests of labor, yet the functioning system maintains or reproduces the contradiction."[57] Heydebrand illustrates the concept of contradiction with a study of the organizational contradictions within judicial systems. In an effort to introduce efficiency and to increase productivity, both administrative and judiciary reforms have been introduced. This has meant, on the one hand, the introduction of administrators into the courts and, on the other hand, more judges and court personnel. These two developments tend to contradict each other with the result that "adjudication and the adversary process are increasingly replaced by negotiation, arbitration, and ultimately administration."[58]

He concludes, "The universalism of cost-effectiveness, under the ideology of scarce resources, comes into contradiction with the universalism of formal rationality and equality before the law. Courts maintain, reproduce, and legitimize the structure of capitalist society, and thus come into contradiction with themselves as that society continues to change."[39]

The fourth principle is praxis, meaning action or activity or practice. Benson defines praxis as "the free and creative reconstruction of social arrangements on the basis of a reasoned analysis of both the limits and the potentials of present social forms."[40] What this means is that theories, for instance, reflect the social context in which they are created and the practical concerns of their creators. Theories also are deeply involved in the creation of organizations, and they guide actors in their organizational behavior. From this tautology Benson concludes: "There is, then, a dialectical relation between organizational arrangements and organizational theories."[41]

The Marxist critique is in its beginning stages, and its advocates, while enthusiastic, ask only that far more research be undertaken. It stands in complete opposition to traditional organizational theory, and the contrast is so distinct as to challenge conventional theorists on every point. It is a blatant effort to develop theories on an ideological basis, but then Marxists and others contend that traditional organization theory itself has an ideological basis, albeit a covert one.

There are obvious problems within the Marxist critique. It is, for example, full of inconsistency. The first principle, "social construction/production," that people create their own world, is contradicted by the concept of totality, which indicates *how* people should construct their world. Then there is Heydebrand's contention that ethno-Marxist theory is applicable to all organizations. This seems to be an example of the overenthusiasm that characterizes the traditional theorists, and Heydebrand is probably in error too.

Ethno-Marxism is interesting because it raises questions concerning traditional theory which must be rethought. The Marxist finds in every aspect of organization a meaning significantly different from that seen by the organizational theorist working in the traditional route. For the Marxist, rules are not so much ways to achieving the stated goals of an organization as they are means to controlling people and exercising power; the hierarchy does not so much represent levels of ability as it does the maintenance of class structure. These are but two examples of how the schools of thought differ. It will be very interesting to see in what form organizational theory will emerge from the Marxist challenge.

The Attack on Positivism

It is clear that organizational theory as it is known today was developed largely, if not entirely, through the assumptions and methods of logical positivism. This philosophical approach is now under heavy attack from many sources. One of the most vigorous assaults on positivist science is that of Susman and Evered, who launch their attack thusly:

> *What appears at first to be a crisis of relevancy or usefulness of organizational science is, we feel, really a crisis of epistemology. This crisis has arisen, in our judgment, because organizational researchers have taken the positivist model of science which has had great heuristic value for the physical and biological sciences and some fields of the social sciences, and have adopted it as the ultimate model of what is best for organizational science. By limiting its methods to what it claims is value-free, logical and empirical, the positivist model of science when applied to organizations produces a knowledge that may only inadvertently serve and sometimes undermine the values of organization members.*[62]

Those who attack positivism invariably offer alternatives that include action research[63] and theory of practice,[64] two vague and ambiguous concepts that are apparently used for their rhetorical rather than their scientific value. Others admit, as does Greenfield, that the result of the rejection of positivism and the substitution of what appears to me to be the assumptions of ethno-Marxism is ". . . not a new theory of organization, but a different way of looking at organizations."[65] He goes on to say, "Within these assumptions, there probably cannot be *a theory* of organizations."[66]

There are two ways of viewing Greenfield's conclusion. The first applies to Susman and Evered and to Culbertson, as well as to Greenfield, and it is that action research, theory of practice, and ethno-Marxism all offer interesting and often useful information about organizations. These, and similar approaches, also offer individuals an interpretation of their own experiences. But what is learned in these ways is not scientific knowledge, it is not generalizable, and often it is of little value to anyone other than the individual using the approach.

The second way of interpreting Greenfield's argument is to conclude that there cannot be scientific theory concerning organizations. This might well be what Greenfield means, since he is familiar with the philosophy of Wittgenstein, whose work might be so interpreted. While reference to Wittgenstein in the literature of organizations is rare, it appears that his work and ideas influence those who attack positivism. Wittgenstein was a logical positivist during his early years, then broke with the positivists, and is responsible for two books which greatly influence modern philosophers.[67] The books are in the form of series of aphorisms, the *Tractatus* being Wittgenstein's doctoral thesis at Cambridge and *Philosophical Investigations* having been assembled from notes found after his death. His methodology is that of logical grammar, and his ideas have generated tremendous interest among philosophers. Many scholars make the interpretation of Wittgenstein their life work.

While Wittgenstein, of course, never discussed organizational theory, nor do his philosophical disciples, he does speak to our general concerns. To quote part of proposition 6.53 from the *Tractatus:* "The correct method in philosophy would really be the following: to say nothing except what can be said, i.e., propositions of natural science. . . ." Wittgenstein's biographers elaborate on this to say, "There simply cannot be any meaningful propositions except those of natural science, . . ."[68] which might be interpreted to mean that a physical science-type theory of organizations is impossible.

The aphorism concerning propositions of natural science was enlarged upon by Wittgenstein in *Philosophical Investigations.* He gave as an example the concept "games" as typical of a set of concepts that could not be rigorously defined. He opened his discussion by raising the question, "What is a game?" He then asked us to look at all sorts of games and consider what is common to them:

> *Don't say: 'There must be something common, or they would not be called "games"' — but look and see whether there is anything common to all. — For if you look at them you will not see something that is common to all, but similarities, relationships, and a whole series of them at that.*[69]

This analysis was picked up by Weitz, first in an article entitled "The Role of Theory in Aesthetics," and later in a book entitled *The Opening Mind.*[70] Weitz reasoned that "game" was an *open concept,* that is, "Its conditions of application are emendable and corrigible; i.e., if a situation or case can be imagined or secured which would call for some sort of *decision* on our part to extend the use of the concept to cover this, or to close the concept and invent a new one to deal with the new case and its new property."[71] He contrasts the open concept with the *closed concept* in this way: "If necessary and sufficient conditions for the application of a concept can be stated, the concept is a closed one. But this can happen only in logic or mathematics where concepts are constructed and completely defined. It cannot occur with empirically descriptive and normative concepts unless we arbitrarily close them by stipulating the ranges of their use."[72] Whereas *game* is an open concept, a particular game can be a closed concept. Weitz illustrates this in a homey way by saying, "'Major-league baseball,' . . . unlike 'game' though fluid and flexible enough in its history, can perform its assigned role under the overall condition that it is governed by a set of definitive criteria so fixed as to ensure that no unresolvable doubts and disputes can arise."[73]

It seems that we can move the argument of whether or not there can be natural science-type theories of organization out of the realm of speculation and prejudice into the logical grammar of Wittgenstein and Weitz. Several questions should be asked: Is the concept "organization" of the same order as "game" in that both function under a disjunctive set of criteria that corresponds to a certain family of resemblances, but these criteria are neither necessary nor sufficient? And, contrariwise, is it clear that "organization" is not a closed concept? Is there a set of necessary and sufficient criteria for the definition of the concept of organization? Are there, however, specific sets of organizations that might meet the definition of a closed concept (analogous to the "major-league baseball" of Weitz)? What might these criteria be? It certainly seems that the logical grammar of Wittgenstein and his followers is a useful area to explore in an effort to resolve the epistemological question of the nature of theory of organizations.

I should point out, however, that Wittgenstein offers no solace to those who wish to introduce their private selves into theoretical formulations. Janik and Toulmin write:

> *For might one not have urged that, on his own later principles, the very intelligibility of words like* **good and right** *is as dependent as that of all other linguistic expressions on the acceptance of those shared language games and forms of life within which they are given their standard uses, and by reference to which alone we can understand one another's choices, decisions and scruples? Surely, his own later position implies that the concept of "values" itself relies for its meaning on the existence of certain standard and recognizable modes of "evaluative" behavior? To this extent Wittgenstein's later philosophy of language could neither justify nor refute, in principle, any complete dissociation of the realm of values from the realm of facts. . . . All that is certain is that, whatever the strict implications of his later position, the absolute dichotomy of facts and values was of great importance to him — of greater importance, indeed, than any particular philosophical argument that might have been put forward to underpin or justify it."*[74]

Weitz, in speaking of Wittgenstein's position on private mental states, is emphatic: "His logical behaviorism denies *in toto* one kind of concept, the concept whose necessary and sufficient criteria are privately mental; it denies as well one kind of necessary condition, the criterion of a private state.""[75]

NEXT STEPS

While I have been lengthy, I have been neither complete nor detailed in my cataloging of criticisms of organizational theory. Leadership theory is in a state of complete disarray.[76] I have, in another paper, discussed the abstract nature of organization theory and its remoteness from the practitioner.[77] And I am sure that there are other criticisms, but enough is enough. At this point I turn to the steps that should be taken in the face of the criticisms discussed above.

1. I believe the most important first step to be taken in the evaluation of current organizational theory is to clarify and come to some agreement on the epistemological question: Can there be a science of organizations comparable to the science of physics or chemistry? We must have answers to the questions: What kind of concept is *organization?* Is organization a closed concept to which the methods of natural science are applicable, or is it an open concept, such as *art,* in which case quite a different approach is necessary. If organization were an open concept, aesthetics would be a more appropriate model for building theory than physics.

The analysis of concepts should not be limited to *organization,* but also to *employee, administration, governing board,* and all the other concepts that we have used without sufficient contextual definition. Resolution of the epistemological issue is, then, the first order of business., .

2. However, even as the epistemological question is settled it seems clear that efforts to develop a general theory of organizations should be replaced by efforts to develop much more restricted theories. Organizations differ so markedly that we should not only be interested in theories about educational organizations, but in theorizing about particular types of educational organizations. How far we should go is problematic, but surely ivy league universities differ markedly from California junior colleges, which differ, in turn, from the New York City public schools. Efforts to develop organizational theories that are distinctively educational should be given considerable support.

3. The critics are vigorous, but they are often sadly lacking in evidence. There is little or no empirical support for the bulk of the criticisms, which at the present time have only face validity. Further, few of the critics define organization theory or identify the theory at which their criticism is directed. They seem to believe that organization theory is homogenous and monolithic, when in fact there are distinguishable and significant differences among the theories, as is evidenced by the study *Developing Taxonomies of Organizational Behavior in Education.*[78] While I agree with Gibson [79] who asks that we stop collecting data and give our time to rethinking our conceptual bases, I hope we would not forget what it is we are doing in our theorizing.

4. The critics of organization theory are persuasive, but they should not be allowed to convince us that everything we have done to date should be thrown out. What is needed is a careful sifting of research and theoretical findings to determine what is useful to what kind of organization and what type of organization member and in what context. In other words, just what in the research and theory on organizations is useful to us in education?

Educational administration is not the only field in which people are concerned with transfer of knowledge. Lichtman and Hunt reviewed a large number of theories of organization and concluded that "the extreme variability found within and among organizations renders one-sided normative theories less useful in understanding organizational behavior than models that recognize situational contingencies."[80] Whether one can safely borrow research or theory done in a particular type of organization is dependent upon whether there is a reasonable degree of isomorphism with the situation in which the theory or research is to be applied. This might be ascertained by applying a set of criteria developed by Katzell[81] and described briefly as follows:

- Size — The number of interdependent organizational members is a crucial variable when attempting to transfer research findings from one kind of organization to another. A number of researchers have related employee absence and turnover, communication difficulties, job satisfaction, and morale to large size. While there is a need for more research on problems caused by size, it is clear that what holds for small organizations may not hold for large organizations.

- Interaction and Interdependence — This parameter deals essentially with structuring the work environment. Katz and Kahn, for instance, argue that where task interdependence is high, where creative requirements are minimal, and where identification with organizational goals is not required, a hierarchical authority structure calling for close supervision is indicated. Where the opposite circumstances obtain, a more democratic alternative should be used for maximum efficiency.[82]
- Personalities of Organizational Members — The motivations, abilities, and other personal qualities seem to be of paramount interest in determining policies and practices.
- Degree of Congruence or Disparity between Organizational Goals and the Needs and Goals of Members — Organizations vary according to goal internalization of their members. The extremes are illustrated by workers on assembly lines and scientists in research companies or universities.
- Who Has Ability and Motivation — As Katzell says,

> *. . . It would seem necessary to mold the organizational system so that it maximizes freedom of action and initiative for those who can and will take effective action, while eliciting compliance, support, or noninterference from others. Depending on the organizational loci of expertise and dedication, the appropriate work system may vary widely from situation to situation.*[83]

I find Katzell's guidelines useful in helping to determine whether a piece of research done in industry, for instance, is applicable to an educational organization. A set of rules might be devised to test the transferability of research findings. Another research task that needs doing is the actual testing of research findings together with the publication of findings that are applicable to particular types of institutions.

5. Not only should the assumptions underlying organization theory be examined and theories be built for sets of educational institutions, but they must be much more complex than are present efforts. The simplicity of present theories is one reason why they are of so little use to practitioners. New theories should give a much larger place to the environment, to networks of related organizations, to the goals of others than the executives, to unions, and, in higher education, to professors as managers. The theories should be closely related to the sociocultural context so as to be able to explain the place of women and minorities in organizations.

And, finally, some way must be found to rationalize or otherwise dispose of the criticisms of traditional organizational theories. The critics are not all aiming at the same aspects of organizational theory, and they do not agree with one another. Some intellectual framework must be found so that those criticisms that survive close scrutiny can be incorporated into a new paradigm.

NOTES

1. D. J. Willower, "Some Issues in Research on School Organization," in *Currents in Administrative Research: Problem Finding in Education*, ed. G. L. Immegart and W. Boyd (Lexington, Mass.: Heath, forthcoming).
2. E. Herda, "Implications of a Critical Discussion in Educational Administration Theory: The Griffiths/Greenfield Debate Examined from a Philosophy of Science Perspective" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Oregon, 1978), p. 171.
3. Ibid., p. 1.
4. Ibid.; T. B. Greenfield, "Theory about Organization: A New Perspective and Its Implications for Schools," in *Administering Education: International Challenge*, ed. M. Hughes (London: Athlone, 1975); D. E. Griffiths, "Contemporary Theory Development and Educational Administration," *Educational Administration* 6, 2 (Summer 1978): 80-93; R. Kendell and D. R. Byrne, "Thinking about the Greenfield-Griffiths Debate," *Educational Administration* 6, 2 (Summer 1978): 107-19; J. Culbertson, "Educational Administration: Where We Are and Where We Are Going," paper delivered at Fourth International Intervisitation Programme, University of British Columbia, Vancouver, May 1978; D. A. Erickson, "Research on Educational Administration: The State of the Art," invited address, Annual Meeting of American Educational Research Association, Toronto, 1978; W. K. Hoy, "Scientific Research in Educational Administration," presidential address, University Council for Educational Administration, 1978, among others.
5. C. Perrow, "Demystifying Organizations," in *The Management of Human Services*, ed. Y. Hasenfeld and R. Saari (New York: Columbia University Press, 1978).
6. C. Perrow, *Complex Organizations* (Glenview, Ill.: Scott, Foresman, 1979), p. 86; T. B. Greenfield, "Theory about Organization," p. 88.
7. S. Clegg and D. Dunkerly, "Introduction: Critical Issues in Organizations," in *Critical Issues in Organizations*, ed. S. Clegg and D. Dunkerly (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1977), p. 2.
8. Perrow, "Demystifying Organizations."
9. Ibid.
10. Ibid.
11. Ibid.
12. Ibid.
13. R. H. Brown, "Bureaucracy as Praxis: Towards a Political Phenomenology of Formal Organizations," *Administrative Science Quarterly* 23, 3 (September 1978): 368, 369; F. Marini, *Towards a New Public Administration* (Scranton, Pa.: Chandler, 1971); H. Garfinkel, *Studies in Ethnomethodology* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1967); J. Pfeffer and G. R. Salancik, *The External Control of Organizations* (New York: Harper & Row, 1978), among others.
14. Perrow, "Demystifying Organizations."
15. J. Wolff, "Women in Organizations," in *Critical Issues in Organizations*, ed. Clegg and Dunkerly, pp. 7-20.

16. D. E. Griffiths, "The Individual in Organization: A Theoretical Perspective," *Educational Administration Quarterly* 13, 2 (Spring 1977): 13.
17. There are, for example, more than 500 public college campuses now unionized as reported in J. H. Bunzel, "College Professors: Do They Have Managerial Status?" *The Wall Street Journal,* 29 September 1978.
18. Greenfield, "Theory about Organization," p. 76.
19. Bunzel, "College Professors: Do They Have Managerial Status?"
20. Yeshiva v. NLRB, 582 F2d 686 (Cir-2d 1978).
21. Pfeffer and Salancik, *The External Control of Organizations.*
22. Perrow, *Complex Organizations,* pp. 217-37.
23. J. K. Benson, review of *The External Control of Organizations,* J. Pfeffer and G. R. Salancik, in *Administrative Science Quarterly* 23, 2 (June 1978): 359.
24. Ibid.
25. Pfeffer and Salancik, *The External Control of Organizations,* p. 2.
26. Ibid., p. 2.
27. Ibid., p. 3.
28. Ibid., p. 12.
29. Ibid., p. 14.
30. Ibid., p. 15.
31. Ibid., p. 30.
32. Some examples are: School of Human Services, St. John's University; School of Human Resources and Education, West Virginia University; and New York University School of Education, Health, Nursing, and Arts Professions.
33. Pfeffer and Salancik, *The External Control of Organizations,* pp. 278-81.
34. D. E. Griffiths, "Administrative Theory and Change in Organizations," in *Innovation in Education,* ed. M. B. Miles (New York: Columbia University Press, 1964), pp. 425-36; D. E. Griffiths, *Administrative Theory* (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1959).
35. J. W. Getzels, J. M. Lipham, and R. F. Campbell, *Educational Administration as a Social Process: Theory, Research, and Practice* (New York: Harper & Row, 1968), p. 106.
36. Benson, review of *The External Control of Organizations,* p. 360.
37. Ibid., pp. 359, 360.
38. Ibid., p. 360.
39. K. S. Cook, "Exchange and Power in Networks of Interorganizational Relations," in *Organizational Analysis,* ed. J. K. Benson (Beverly Hills: Sage, 1977), p. 64.
40. R. Morris and I. Hirsh-Lescohier, "Service Integration: To What Problems Is It the Presumed Solution?" in *The Management of Human Services,* ed. Hasenfeld and Saari.
41. Perrow, "Demystifying Organizations," p. 233; K. Weick, "Educational Organizations as Loosely Coupled Systems," *Administrative Science Quarterly* 21, 1 (March 1976): 1-19.

42. J. D. Millet, *The Academic Community: An Essay on Organization* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1962), p. 4.
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5

Contemporary issues in theory in educational administration

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Current controversies regarding theory in educational administration deal more with philosophical issues surrounding theory development and application than with the contents of various theories. The bulk of this paper will be devoted to the exploration of some of these issues. As treated here they fall into three general areas. One is epistemological, the second has to do with abstraction and the concept of system, and the third is concerned with values and ideology.

SOME COMMENTS ON SUBSTANTIVE THEORY

First, however, a few brief and sketchy comments are made on developments in and around substantive theory about school organizations. In the long run such developments will probably contribute more to our field than the abstruse debates we undertake about the nature of theory and of knowledge.

The theories used in educational administration are ordinarily adapted from the social sciences and like all scientific theories, they are speculative explanations that are tentatively held, waiting to be disproved or simply discarded for a variety of reasons and replaced by new conjectures. Furthermore, theories attempt to account for only a limited set of observations of phenomena.

Five years ago I described theory in educational administration as consisting largely of a wide range of varied frameworks that tended to be fragmented and lacking in coherent logical structure.[1] This meant that the connections between theory and research were often tenuous. The situation in educational administration is the same today. But that assessment applies as well to the social sciences generally.

All theories are provisional and partial, and particularly in the social sciences, they tend to be imperfectly articulated, imperfectly operationalized, and imperfectly tested. Theories in educational administration have to be seen in the context of the social sciences and science itself. They exhibit all the limitations this implies, and there are added complications because in educational administration we are interested in the uses of knowledge as well as its creation.

Substantial psychological, operational, and social-organizational constraints make the application of theories by practicing administrators a difficult and problematic undertaking.[2] Indeed, it is quite clear that theories are simply not used very much in the realm of practice. In addition, many members of departments of educational administration in universities are heavily involved with the problems of practice as consultants, and theory building and research, even research on practice, have not had their attention, although the interest in school organizations shown by some individuals from other fields has helped to compensate for this.[3] All of these—the limits of science and especially social science, the difficulties of application, and the indifference of many in the field—have undoubtedly contributed to a certain disenchantment with theory in educational administration, a disenchantment in harmony with the character of the times.

The failures of the best and the brightest from Viet Nam to Three Mile Island have obscured the accomplishments of space exploration, added to the popular distrust of societal institutions, and reinforced a picture of science as a kind of Frankenstein's monster that in the end destroys its creator.[4] Moreover, certain kinds of approaches and theories fit such times better than others.[5] These might not be the best of times for science or for theory building, but they are producing some lively controversies.

Some of the views being advanced in the social sciences, organization theory, and educational administration reject traditional theory development and, in varying degrees, scientific method itself. Examples abound in the phenomenological approaches that recently have become popular.

Marxist thought has sometimes been blended with the phenomenological perspective in spite of fundamentally different and conflicting origins.[6] Although Marxism serves to remind us of the importance of societal context and of the non-linear character of much of history and of change, it is essentially a body of dogma reinforced by its place as part of a political movement and given to polemical expression.[7] Marxists construct organizations in terms of a pregiven credo. No efforts are made to test or disprove this credo, so the Marxist position cannot be taken as an open-minded attempt to understand organizations.[8] In any case, the position is not examined separately here.

Despite the emergence of phenomenological and Marxist approaches to organizations, they have not yet had much impact on the study of school organizations. The use of theories in educational administration more or less follows the fashions in the social sciences, especially sociology and social psychology, and in the developing area of organizational analysis.

Thus, role theory appears to have declined in popularity all around, and leadership theories seem not to have been sources of significant new ideas in recent years, although they continue to be popular.[9] When one finds work in bureaucratic theory in sociology, it continues to feature studies of bureaucratic dysfunction often pursued using various kinds of social system concepts. Application of bureaucratic theory to schools has not been extensive perhaps because the components of bureaucracy do not apply equally well to schools, perhaps because one segment of school life, that having to do with the students, is more bureaucratized than the rest.[10]

Also, as was just noted, work on bureaucratic theory is frequently interwoven with structural-functional analysis and social system theory. Max Weber presented bureaucracy as an ideal or hypothetical type, not as an existential one. The best of the innumerable speculations and studies stemming from Weber's seminal work have examined the consequences of bureaucratization, usually in structural-functional or social system terms. The worst have incorrectly acted as if Weber's ideal type depicted reality and proclaimed what we already know, that neither organizations nor people can be adequately described as purely rational. But, in any event, bureaucratic theory has not been a major thrust in thinking about school organizations.

The same can be said for general systems theory which never really caught on in organization theory proper or in educational administration in spite of the glowing pictures of major breakthroughs painted by adherents. General systems theory nowadays is connected more with organizational technique than with organizational theory. The potential represented by an array of interesting concepts of which the notion of thresholds is just one example, remains largely unrealized.[11]

Perhaps the most illuminating work on school organizations to date is found in the strands of inquiry that began with Willard Waller.[12] Based on various formulations of open system and social system theory, sometimes with structural-functionalist overtones, this work examines school organizations in terms of structural features including norms, status systems, and socialization processes, seeing educator and student groups in an organizational context and the whole in the context of the larger environment. The utility of this work and some of its weaknesses have been treated elsewhere, but it should be noted here that the perspective is strong on explanation and helps to make sense of much that goes on in school organizations.[13]

Various kinds of exchange theories, conflict theories, contingency theories, the loose coupling metaphor, and the garbage can model have become more prominent or been advanced in the social sciences or organizational analysis in recent years. The first two have had surprisingly little use in educational administration considering the nature of their subject matter.[14]

Contingency theory has guided a few studies in educational administration, notably those by Hanson.[15] However, his work is hard to distinguish from that using open system or social system frameworks. One issue is whether contingency theory is a theory in the first place. Put another way, is contingency theory a set of related concepts and generalizations that serve to explain or is it a broad injunction to focus on the complexity of relationships and the contingencies that affect them?

In the latter vein, one recent study contrasted contingency predictions with universalistic ones. The latter were simple two variable cause and effect predictions, while the former posited that the relationship between two variables would predict a third.[16] But this is familiar indeed. In the educational administration literature of the 1950's we find Getzels and Guba proposing that effectiveness is a function of the congruence of expectations and behavior, and that job satisfaction is a function of the congruence of expectations and need dispositions.[17] It seems that many of us have been contingency theorists without using the label.

In any event, who dares deny the world's complexity? The careful professor's stock answer, "It all depends," may be a source of frustration to students, but it recognizes that there is a lot of truth in the notion that although the best questions are simple ones, their answers are complicated. In this general sense, we can all embrace contingency theory, or more accurately, a contingency perspective. However, when the perspective leads to conceptual frameworks that function as explanations, each framework will have to be assessed in its own right.

The loose coupling concept and the garbage can model have much in common.[18] Loose coupling can be a property of garbage can processes as well as a characteristic of the relationship of organizational elements.

Loose coupling was originally applied to educational organizations and the garbage can model explores decision processes in organizations, but especially in those labeled organized anarchies. The main characteristics of organized anarchies—ambiguous goals, unclear technology, and fluid participation—fit schools. Moreover, several empirical studies of educational organizations using the approaches have been done.[19]

The garbage can represents an interesting conceptualization. Its popularity seems assured since its rather catchy concepts and metaphors suit the times rather well.[20] Of course, it is necessary to go beyond the novel analogies that are so helpful in developing ideas and attempt to determine whether and in what circumstances garbage can theory illuminates what happens in school organizations.

I have said elsewhere that schools seem to me to be more organized than anarchic.[21] I referred to aspects of school life, especially those having to do with students, that are highly routinized and controlled. A variety of internal and external forces promote instability and uncertainty in school organizations. However, these forces are countered by a wide array of social-organizational structures that reduce uncertainty and respond to norms of rationality.[22] Hence, the state of school organizations observed at any given time is the result of a curious dialectic, the interplay of these forces and countering structures. Perhaps garbage can theory more adequately comprehends school organizations in destabilized circumstances, perhaps system type concepts more adequately comprehend them in stabilized ones.

Also, the garbage can model applies better to certain segments of school organizations than to others. Its strong suit is decision making under changeable conditions. Its application in other areas may be more problematic. Indeed, it could even be argued that while the garbage can fits decision making in higher education reasonably well, its application to decision making in elementary and secondary schools is more doubtful.

Even so, the garbage can approach offers a framework that could lead to a profusion of fresh hypotheses about organizational and especially administrative life. Many of the relatively straightforward, middle range notions found in this approach are ripe for empirical exploration and conceptual elaboration. For example, propositions about the allocation of attention and inattention and about the circumstances under which solutions seek problems should be developed and examined in school settings.

The loose coupling idea has a familiar ring to students of school organizations, although the name and extended development of the notion are new. Bidwell's discussion of structural looseness in school organizations, Lortie's distinction between hard rules that pertain in administrative matters and soft rules that pertain in instructional ones, and our study of principals' written reports of classroom observations, dubbed ceremonial congratulations because the principals' statements were ritualistic and unrelated to specific instructional activities, are all examples of work that could have employed the loose coupling metaphor, if it had been devised earlier.[23]

I am not sure, however, that those inquiries would have been any better for it. The point is that the loose coupling notion fits some past work on schools and, hence, probably describes at least certain features of school life. Some contend that high schools are better depicted as loosely coupled systems than as bureaucracies.[24] The choice between loose coupling and bureaucracy is unfortunate, partly because bureaucracy, everyone's straw man, does not apply well to schools, but primarily because such a choice can be misleading. It is likely to give an inflated impression of support for loose coupling. Moreover, loose coupling might actually be facilitated by underlying normative and organizational structures that channel behavior. Thus, supervision and instruction can be loosely coupled because teachers generally adhere to the "rules of the game" in their classrooms.

Perhaps the loose coupling concept should be placed in context. It might be more fruitful to talk about a coupling continuum or at least contrasting categories with loose coupling at one end and tight coupling at the other. The trick then is to find out what organizational and environmental features relate to varied levels of coupling. Loose coupling may be an attractive concept as Weick implies, but it needs both theoretical and empirical development. Treating it as a variable is one way to spur such development.

Probably the coupling notion will continue to play some part in garbage can studies, but it is also a natural for use in functional analysis as Weick is aware, although he seems uneasy about it. For example, in school organizations, where socially shaped teacher judgment and lore rather than a clear-cut technology guide the main work of the organization, the loose coupling of supervision and instruction may be functional for the organization and its members, if not always for its clients.

This treatment of substantive theory about school organizations has, as promised, been brief and sketchy.[25] Even so, it suggests the kinds of theoretical inquiries that have characterized work on schools as well as those that are newly emerging. In spite of all its limitations, I find the field vibrant and exciting, and believe considerable progress has been made in understanding educational organizations as a variety of theoretical perspectives have been brought to bear on them.

Of course, I am biased. My work is studying and teaching about educational organizations, trying to find out, as my father used to say, "what makes them tick." Because I relish the hunt for explanations, but see them all as provisional, my assessment of progress probably reflects the range of interesting ideas in the field more than it does the adequacy of the applications and tests of those ideas.

SOME CRITICISMS OF THE CRITICS

In turning to the phenomenological approaches that have increasingly become topics of controversy in educational administration, it should be noted that phenomenology was founded by Edmund Husserl as a school of philosophy. However, as has been shown elsewhere, social science versions of phenomenology have only a vague connection to Husserl's philosophy, which was basically a subjectivistic search for essences through direct experiencing of the immediately given, and which, in stark contrast with phenomenological social science, presented a well-developed epistemology.[26]

Phenomenological social science is hard to pin down, but those who employ the framework are united by opposition to what they call positivistic science and are committed to the exploration of human experience, usually in concrete forms and preferably through some sort of empathic method.[27] Some join the Marxists in a thorough going criticism not only of current social science but also of the unjust social arrangements they believe it abets.

However, Marxists reject subjectivism and the philosophical idealism that underlies it. They also see phenomenological approaches to social change as mentalistic and shallow. Nevertheless, common enemies and some similar interests have led to the efforts noted earlier to blend the views, and to mutual support on a number of issues. My impression is that the Marxist connection has helped to buttress the phenomenological critique of the social sciences, especially in some European countries where both views have been more popular than they have in the United States.

Both perspectives feature major ideological components and their partisans tend to be true believers when promulgating their positions rather than offering them for critical examination and test. These elements of dogma and belief, which are so antithetical to inquiry and the free invention and testing of ideas, are much stronger in Marxism than in phenomenological social science. However, they can be found in much phenomenologically oriented writing, now even in organization theory and educational administration where the message is being preached by recent converts who previously must have been unaware of the phenomenological perspective, or perhaps had just not thought much about it, but now embrace it wholeheartedly and with the dedication of the convert.[28]

Even so, in criticizing the critics, an effort will be made to separate the worthwhile from the dogmatism, the philosophical failures, and the sheer nonsense that have marked some applications of the phenomenological view. After all, every serious idea should be welcomed and explored.

Epistemology

In educational administration and in organization theory proper, phenomenologically oriented critics have used the term epistemology often and glibly, but they have failed to cross the epistemological Rubicon. Epistemology is, in the end, theory of knowledge, and in order to argue about epistemology responsibly, it is necessary that the debaters present their views on what constitutes knowledge.[29] Failure to do so means that contrasting lines of thought are not fully drawn, and in the present case it leaves unanswered the question of the epistemological position taken by the critics. Do they with Husserl attempt to escape the solipsism that threatens subjectivistic theories of knowledge by adopting a form of transcendental idealism?[30] Or, do they introduce a competency dimension that converts "personal knowledge" to more general or "responsible knowledge" as Polanyi did?[31]

Some epistemological positions such as those stemming from the empirical, naturalistic, pragmatic, or positivisitic traditions in philosophy are compatible with generally scientific conceptions of knowledge and knowledge-getting.[32] Others which end in intuition, faith, or authority as final arbiters of truth are not.

The point being made is a crucial one. If the phenomenological criticism of science is genuinely epistemological, then the critics must specify their own epistemological position or convict themselves of intellectual irresponsibility. If they have a theory of knowledge to present that is an alternative to those that accommodate the scientific notion of ideas as hypotheses to be publically tested, let them present it. If they do not and are concerned only with methodology, and types of theory, then they ought to drop their epistemological pretensions. The same considerations apply to the social science views of critics who espouse a dualistic position that proposes one epistemology (or is it method?) for physical science and another for social science.[33]

I cannot tell from reading Greenfield or others using the phenomenological framework in educational administration or in organization theory whether a full epistemological critique or a narrower methodological one is intended. They should address this issue in a straightforward manner. The present situation furnishes an excellent example of unclarified presuppositions, to use a term the critics favor almost as much as they do the term epistemology, and with as little application to their own views.

It will be interesting to see if the critics continue to shy away from a full-fledged epistemological effort that would have to confront the problem of intersubjective knowledge, one of the Achilles' heels of subjectivistic approaches.

Ideology

If one feature of the phenomenological criticism has been to talk a lot about epistemology without setting forth an epistemological position, another has been the argument that theory and even science are essentially ideology.[34] I see theories as provisional explanations, not ideologies. However, particular theories can fit particular ideologies, whether intended or not, and theories can have social and ideological consequences, whether intended or not.

Ideologies include attitudes, values, and orientations toward man and the world that are usually held onto tenaciously by adherents. As Geertz suggests, ideology and science can clash in the sense that the former demands commitment.[35]

The positions taken by the critics tend to be ideological rather than theoretical. They present a viewpoint to which they are fully committed. They are advocates, not skeptics. Ideologists from top to toe, they proclaim that all theories are ideologies. This puts their own largely ideological views on an equal footing with scientific theories and deflects attention from the part played by logic and evidence in the assessment of theories.

Indeed, the critics' all-purpose answer is that criticism of their views is mere ideology, with the slightly more sophisticated version holding that the ideology is buried in presuppositions and, hence, is unrecognized. Part of the ideology issue appears to be political, a point elaborated later. But part may be epistemological in the sense that the critics attach the labels ideology and presupposition to positions that reflect theories of knowledge that they disapprove. This is another reason why they ought to clarify their epistemological position. Then, their views and alternative ones, along with the assumptions of each, could be fully examined and compared.

Another salutary event would be for the critics to make serious efforts to show in what ways and why they believe specific theories fit specific ideological patterns. Doing so would be far more worthwhile than merely proclaiming that theory is ideology and would allow others to assess the grounds for specifically asserted congruities of theory and ideology.

What kind of ideology fits science itself? I suppose it would assign high value to curiosity and the search for explanation and understanding, cherish ideas and reason, honor evidence, always be open to new conceptions, and assume that empirical observations will in the end exhibit at least some degree of order. Ideology consistent with science would have to advocate freedom and oppose dogmas of every sort, which is one reason authority has historically been brought to bear by the doctrinally committed to stifle free inquiry and demand conformity to particular creeds.

The kind of ideology that fits science is unusual in one respect. It is an ideology that is anti-ideology in the sense that it requires commitment only to the methods of inquiry, not to a wider set of beliefs or any kind of orthodoxy. Anything can be questioned. The commitment is to questioning.

Positivism

What they call positivistic science is one of the major aversions of virtually all of the phenomenologically oriented critics.[36] After a few comments about the much maligned and sometimes misunderstood philosophy of logical positivism or logical empiricism, to use the term many of its proponents prefer, some criticisms of "positivist" methodology in the study of school organizations are considered.

Meaning is the main problem of logical empiricism.[37] A major concern has been the analysis of language, which has stressed the distinctions between statements that have factual meaning and those with meaning of another kind such as logico-mathematical, emotional, or pictorial. Such analysis is undertaken to clarify meaning and the relation of meaning and experience, or in science, observations. Statements are scientifically meaningful only if intersubjectively testable, which underscores the importance of operationalism. However, many logical empiricists find the extreme notion captured in quips like "intelligence is what intelligence tests measure" inadequate on the grounds that scientific concepts should be understood in their empirical and conceptual contexts in science.[38] And, contrary to what some critics have stated, logical empiricists do not necesssarily take a realist position on the independence of the world from experiencing minds since their analyses proceed on the basis of statements and observations, not things as such.[39]

Although I find logical empiricism to be a somewhat narrow view philosophically, and lopsided in its emphasis on the critical and verificational side of science to the exclusion of its creative side, there is much of value in the position. Indeed, the issues of meaning and operationalism are key ones in qualitative approaches in the social sciences since they speak to potential weaknesses.

The critique of "positivistic science" in the study of school organizations is straightforward. It is held that preoccupation with narrow quantitative methods stints the meaning of organizational life as it is experienced by participants, that statistical analyses and instruments are pale and perhaps misleading shadows of social reality, that people are ignored or treated as mere objects to be measured while organizations are reified, that researchers claim value neutrality but take certain kinds of values for granted, and that explanation is sought at the expense of understanding.

More generally, critics see positivistic thought as akin to that of Dickens' Mr. Gradgrind who was mindlessly devoted to: "Facts, sir; nothing but facts."[40] And they often see such thought as morally deficient because they believe it defends conventional social arrangements.

Some of these criticisms are basically methodological rather than philosophical, and some of them are well taken. The richness versus precision argument is an old one in the social sciences, and it is plain to me that, in educational administration, we have erred on the side of precision.[41]

I welcome greater use of qualitative methods in the study of schools. Griffiths called for field studies of school organizations in 1959.[42] I began my first protracted observational study almost 20 years ago and have continued to use and advocate field methods.[43] And we should go further. Experience audits, logs, diaries, biography, photography, film, and novels merely suggest the variety of investigative strategies awaiting refinement and more extensive use.[44] Indeed, attempts might be made to apply the method of phenomenological reduction in administration. Would the post-reflective reports of educational administrators and other school personnel trained to use such methods provide new insights of value? Perhaps the idea is far fetched, even foolish. But it represents the kind of creative possibility that can be generated by different perspectives.

The obvious strengths of qualitative methods lie in the production of new concepts, ideas, and hypotheses and in the immediate and holistic character of the information presented. But such methods have their own special problems. Words like selectivity, classification, unit of analysis, and representativeness suggest some of them.[45] Plainly, qualitative methods often require and benefit from the incorporation of quantitative elements.

I argue for qualitative methods because a variety of methods are needed to speak to the variety of problems encountered in educational administration as well as to abet the formulation of new problems and their examination from several angles. However, for some problems, aggregations of data are preferable to single cases, no matter how richly etched. But, above all, methods are fundamentally tools that should be freely chosen to fit intended purposes.

The people who participate in research, or subjects in the social science vernacular, should be treated by everyone engaged in inquiry with the honesty, respect, and dignity all human beings deserve. Abuses seem less likely in cases where people anonymously complete questionnaires than in cases where they are more intensely involved, but abuses do not appear to be associated so much with phenomenological or positivistic styles as with particular circumstances.

The claim that positivistic science seeks explanation at the expense of understanding needs clarification. I know what explanation is, but I am not so sure about understanding as something at odds with, and above, explanation. I suspect that what the critics are getting at here is empathy, a sense of how others feel, perhaps conveyed by a touching vignette or striking instance.

There is no question that empathy of this kind is important. Brancusi's head of a boy evokes the fragile vulnerability of children in a unique way, and D.H. Lawrence's description of Ursula Brangwen's bitter frustrations as a teacher can tell an administrator something about the plight of a novice teacher that most textbooks miss.[46] An incident from my experience suggests the recurring, often humorous, lesser trials of administration. A program head requested $800 for an important faculty project and, when I got the money from higher administration after elaborate efforts, showed me his miscalculations—$800 was useless, the project could not be carried out without $1000. We got the money, but partly because the administrator with the purse strings was empathetic and enjoyed the story too.

Thus, art, literature, and even simple personal experiences can foster a kind of sympathetic identification, an empathy that confers insight. Good teachers make the most of it, and it can help everyone, including theorists and researchers, gain enhanced appreciation of life in educational organizations. But empathy is not explanation, nor is it understanding unless that term is given a special meaning.

My dictionary lists seven meanings for understanding, and the social sciences aren't much better.[47] When writing an article like this one I usually use the term more or less synonymously with explanation, but with an emphasis on persons, as when they understand or comprehend an explanation, and contrast both explanation and understanding with prediction. Perhaps we should all use the term more carefully. Phenomenologically oriented writers might be well advised to stick with a word like empathy. Their use of the term understanding seems a little pretentious, but we should be thankful they do not confuse empathy with knowledge.

In addition, I cannot accept the argument that explanation drives out understanding or empathy, or is somehow inferior to it. Explanation and empathy are simply different. Both are valuable, and the critics only set an intellectual trap for themselves when they try to place the two in opposition or put one above the other. As with epistemology, everybody would be better off if the critics turned from broad but superficial commentary to either more complete conceptual treatment or to more specific investigations, in this case, of empathy. Work on the part played by empathy in the practice of administration and in the teaching of administration would be illustrative. Meanwhile, if we are to understand understanding as used by the critics, we might try reading empathy for it rather than comprehension.

The reification, values, and defense of conventional social arrangements issues will be considered shortly, but not in the same parts of this essay. Next, the place of the concept of system in current discussions about theory in educational administration is explored.

Systems

The concept of system is usually taken by phenomenologically oriented critics, and Marxists too, as an abstraction that is reified in the various theories that employ the concept.[48] One element of the criticism is that system type theories neglect people. This brings to mind Gouldner's wry comment that embodied individuals are exiled from Parsons' system, materializing only momentarily as they pass, phantom-like, through role locations.[49] Such criticisms also often imply that system theories neglect the welfare of people, that these theories somehow abet the domination of people by systems or organizations, or as it is commonly put, by "the system."

Another element that is sometimes part of the reification argument is that systems are treated like things, in this instance, like organisms that have certain needs, struggle for survival, and adapt to their environments. The villain here is ordinarily functional analysis.

Some of these criticisms make sense. Some do not. There is little doubt that system-type theories neglect people as individuals. Their concepts place people in categories. People undergo socialization, conform or deviate from norms, and hold certain social positions. But that is what some kinds of social science are all about, the study of people, not as individuals but as members of collectivities, and, it might be added, such study has immensely enriched our understanding of human beings since they exist in social contexts, not in social vacuums.

Of course, theoretical treatments often go awry, and treatments of systems are no exception. Thus, the idea that systems have needs or requirements that must be met if they are to survive seems dubious. The biological analogy is obvious but just what the requirements are is not so obvious. Indeed, Merton calls the concept of functional requirements "one of the cloudiest and empirically most debatable concepts in functional theory."[50]

Here I agree with the critics. The notion of system (or organization) needs or requirements creates problems rather than solving them. Furthermore, it is unnecessary. System adaptations or uncertainty reducing behavior can be understood as adherence to norms of rationality, or even as discretion enhancing behavior by overlapping generations of individuals in decision making positions in systems or organizations.[51]

Nonetheless, the charge of reification misses the mark. Modern theorists see systems and organizations as concepts, not as things. Concepts and theories are the tools of inquiry, and the aim is to use these tools to direct and account for observations. Thoughts and observations, not things, are the immediate subject matter of inquiry.

In any case, a major portion of the critics' concern about reification appears to be based on their values and politics. They see reified systems as oppressors of people. But this distorts and misuses an explanatory concept. It is like arguing that theories focusing on individuals abet evil doing by individuals. Injustices, whether committed in the name of individuals, the state, the organization, or for other reasons, can and should be opposed by all of us as human beings, whatever our theoretical bents or lack of them.

System type theories can help us understand collective behavior, but that does not make such theories or theorists oppressors. Is someone who studies control mechanisms in organizations fostering unjust control within organizations? I have studied such mechanisms in school organizations, and I yield to no one in my love of liberty and abhorence of oppression. But the issue is less personal. It is whether the use of system ideas in inquiry abets oppression in particular systems. I have seen no evidence of such a linkage. Its assertion appears to be essentially ideological. It fits what the critics would like to believe.

Yet, it is as plausible to argue that directing attention via system concepts to the impact of collectivities on individuals can expose injustices. And it is worth noting that particular systems, like particular individuals, can contribute to the achievement of base or noble ends. A more basic consideration is that, whether or not theories are used or misused for political purposes, they are explanatory schemes that must ultimately be judged on scientific rather than political grounds.

Finally, there is an interesting anomaly in the critics' position on systems and oppression. Take Greenfield on organizations as an example.[52] To provide insight on the domination of people in organizations, he recounts the tale of a novice nun whose every behavior is observed and regulated. His point is that organizations typically exhibit forms similar to those found in the extreme case of the nun, but in reduced intensity.

The anomaly is this. Greenfield attributes enormous power to organizations, more than many system oriented theorists would, yet he eschews the very theoretical frameworks that explore the topics of his concern—order and control, conformity and deviance. This might be an unintended consequence of his intense ideological commitments. He dislikes organizations because he thinks they are oppressive and he identifies with the individuals who are oppressed. Hence, he shuns theories that deal with organizations and calls for studies of individual "realities."[53] Such studies might be helpful, but the point is that the theories that seem most likely to enhance understanding of the effects of organizations on their members are cast aside.

More On Values And Ideology

This brings us to a closer consideration of the position on values of the phenomenologically oriented critics. Unfortunately, their conceptions of the undesirable are far clearer than their conceptions of the desirable.[54] As has already been shown, one element is their criticism of values and ideologies alien to their point of view. However, this has not entailed the kind of debate usually found between those espousing different positions on values. There is no debate as such. The critics' quarrel is with what they take to be the value and ideological "presuppositions" of their silent adversaries, in this case, students of organizations other than themselves.[55] Although underlying value positions have not always been made explicit, many of these criticisms have already been considered.

Another element of the critics' value position is political, encompassing the reification argument just examined, and for some of the critics ending in rejection of current social and institutional arrangements including those in education. This view is more explicit among those who attempt to mix phenomenological and Marxist perspectives.[56] The more Marxist versions are typical of that position in that they stress the economic basis of society and its influence on political and organizational forms.

However, some non-Marxist critics simply argue that schools are oppressive organizations. Greenfield, for example, asserts that "...there is a profound sense in which to be a teacher or principal is to become a force as violent as those at play in being a guard in a concentration camp or being a pilot of an aircraft in a fire-bombing raid."[57] The aptness of his analogies aside, his point is that teachers and principals, as representatives of society, subjugate children and reshape their initially impulsive behavior along socially approved lines.

The critics plow no new ground here. The Marxist position is shopworn, indeed, and Greenfield's concerns about schools echo those of many past works of which Rousseau's *Emile* is but one example.

In any event, the critics' brands of social criticism are not especially effective. The Marxist oriented position is hampered by the shroud of dogma woven by its high priests (Marx; Engels, and Lenin), and the non-Marxist position tends to the subjective and emotional while neglecting social structures which are often keys to effective change. That is regrettable since social criticism can be a valuable aid to the refreshment and renewal of social institutions.

Another element in the value position of some critics stems from their emphasis on experience and the social construction of reality, as well as their belief that researchers should empathically adopt the perspectives of persons they study. Developed under rubrics dealing with practice and action research, this style of thought can be applied directly in professional fields, and it seems sure that it will be employed soon in educational administration.[58]

The general idea is that the way in which positivistic research is done and reported increases its irrelevance for practitioners and that such research ignores the experiences of practitioners, manipulating them rather than listening to them. The critics' antedote upgrades the value of participants' reports of their experiences and deemphasizes verificational criteria in favor of relevance and meaningfulness.

How far the critics intend to go along these lines is unclear. Again, their criticisms are less obscure than their programs. The approach seems likely to have problems because of its subjective nature and because it stresses experience instead of the reconstruction of experience afforded by theoretical explanation.

However, the critics' emphasis on practice represents a value position more than it does a strategy. It is part of their devaluation of "positivistic" science and glorification of subjective experience. Just what kinds of practice oriented inquiry they propose and whether or how it would differ from such inquiry undertaken within the framework of ordinary science is ambiguous. It almost seems that, spurred by the value they assign to experience, they simply seek enhanced status for studies that focus on practice. In any case, they appear to have vastly underestimated the extent to which system type theories can shed light on the problems of practice.

I agree with the critics' general contention that every point of view reflects or fits certain values and ideologies. That is why I place so much value on the norms of inquiry that hold that ideas should be subjected to public tests aimed at disproof. That is one way to deter those who would impose their ideas on everybody else. Furthermore, the processes of inquiry are aimed at reducing the influence of personal biases, values, and ideologies on the assessment of ideas. Commitment to these public, aboveboard processes suggests open minds and a willingness to modify or discard ideas that are found wanting. Rejection of such processes suggests closed minds and the likelihood that the position in question consists of little more than the values and ideology of its adherents.

PROSPECTS

Patently, the critics have raised a variety of issues of a broad, metatheoretical kind. The ventilation of such issues is healthy, but whether phenomenologically oriented criticism will have much influence on theory development as such in educational administration is another question. After all, little or no research has been done and no substantive theories have been presented by the critics.

Indeed, some critics appear to reject the idea of theory itself because theory is necessarily abstract. Greenfield tells us that studies of topics like the "hidden injuries of learning, teaching and being an administrator" are needed, and that such studies "must work with the unique, the specific, to reach larger insights that carry conviction and meaning beyond themselves."[59] This statement suggests the relevance of my earlier comments on empathy. It can be translated as a call for research, probably using field or interview methods, that will furnish striking illustrations of what life is like for particular people in school organizations.

But what is new about that? To cite just a few examples, Waller's book offered numerous illustrations taken from interesting cases; Hollingshead's study, which provided some rather striking quantitative data on social class effects in schools, also sketched a few vivid pictures of the contrasting treatment of different students; and Wolcott's examination of an elementary school principal treated an N of one in as rich detail as is reasonable to expect.[60]

Last year, Hugh Fraser and I conducted telephone interviews with 50 school superintendents concerning their feelings about their work.[61] I barely resisted the temptation to write and publish side by side two accounts of this research, one in the usual style, the other announcing a phenomenological breakthrough, a study tapping the superintendents' constructions of reality including their finest hours and their bitterest regrets. The point is that the two reports would not have differed substantively even though the phenomenological trappings might have created a superficial impression that they did.

Nevertheless, if one result of the critics' work is more research than we have had on life in schools in the case or field modes, that will be all to the good. And, as Merton reminds us, research exerts pressure for clear concepts, so there might be an additional benefit for phenomenologically oriented researchers.[62] In any case, greater attention should be given in educational administration to the intricacies of qualitative methods, the kind of attention exemplified by the recent issue of *Administrative Science Quarterly* devoted to the topic.[63]

Although I hope I am wrong, to recapitulate, I do not expect much substantive theory from the critics, and I do not expect much research that will be very different from the qualitative research we already have. It is possible that their most worthwhile contributions will be made in the study of practice, but that remains to be seen. All this assumes that the critics' main concerns are methodological.

However, some of them are quite earnest about the idea that they are bringing us a new paradigm in the Kuhnian use of the term.[64] In a short piece titled, "Mintzberg's Final Paradigm," it was recently suggested, tongue in cheek, that the word paradigm be dropped in the social sciences where it has been employed so ubiquitously and so inappropriately.[65]

Mintzberg was soon rebutted.[66] The discussion indicated how conversion to a new paradigm is a near religious experience for some individuals, but the exchange itself suggested the same thing—some true believers lose their sense of humor along with their skepticism.

If the critics believe they are dealing with something that goes beyond the choice of methodologies or theories, they had better get about the business of making their positions explicit, especially their epistemology and their axiology. If they made these positions explicit, it would become clear that they are covering old philosophical ground, but with new zeal.

In their zeal, many of the phenomenologically oriented critics, like the Marxists, divide the world in two and are driven to extremes. As Husserl used the Cartesian method of doubt to gain certainty,[67] they use criticism to reach for the certainty of a new creed. They contrast their subjectivistic approach with the most extreme positivism and recognize nothing between. Like modern Neitzsches, they would replace facts with feelings and ideas with experiences. Because knowledge is created by people and because people perceive their worlds, the critics exaggerate the social construction of reality in true "me generation" style, as if all of history and all of knowledge depended on their construction of it.[68] Their political views are cut from similar doctrinal cloth. One senses little about them that is tentative or awaiting further investigation.

Creeds are antithetical to inquiry. Viewpoints that put doctrine before exploration are not likely to abet the search for explanation in educational administration or any other field.

So I expect that advances in theory development in educational administration will have little to do with the criticisms considered here. Theoretical advance requires the articulation of well drawn explanations that are both logically coherent and empirically viable. And theories should be abstract and hypothetical in form so that they are not bound to a given time and a given place. Open system and social system theories are likely to continue to help us learn more about what makes school organizations tick. Newer theories like the garbage can model, conflict theories, and others yet to be invented will surely make their contributions as well. I also believe that efforts at synthesis using system type frameworks and drawing on research already done could be especially valuable. Although progress in the conceptual realm has the potential to abet the kind of deliberate reconstruction of experience that could inform and transform practice, more theoretical and research attention needs to be given to the process of practice and to its context.

Finally, we should become more comfortable with the rhythms and limits of inquiry. Theories and methodologies will come and go, but the process of questioning, exploring, and testing remains. It is a process that will sometimes be poorly carried out and always imperfectly so. And it will never lead to certainty. Winston Churchill once remarked that democracy is the worst form of government except for any other that has ever been tried.[69] So it is with inquiry. It is the worst method for gaining understanding except for any other that has ever been tried.

NOTES

1. D. J. Willower, "Theory in Educational Administration," *Journal of Educational Administration* 13 (May 1975). This paper also considers various definitions of theory and addresses the problem of criteria of adequacy, issues that will not be considered in the present paper.
2. These are elaborated on in my "Some Issues in Research on School Organizations," in *Problem Finding in Educational Administration*, G. L. Immegart and W. L. Boyd, eds. (Lexington, Mass.: D. C. Heath, 1979).
3. R. F. Campbell and L. J. Newell, *A Study of Professors of Educational Administration* (Columbus: University Council for Educational Administration, 1973) presents information on the research activities of educational administration faculty.
4. The allusion is of course to David Halberstam's *The Best and the Brightest* (Greenwich, Conn.: Fawcett, 1973); and the reference is to Mary Wollstonecraft Shelly's novel, *Frankenstein, or the Modern Prometheus*, first published in 1818.
5. D. J. Willower, "Ideology and Science in Organization Theory," *Educational Administration Quarterly* 15 (Fall 1979).
6. Attempts to blend the views can be found in F. R. Dallmayr, "Phenomenology and Marxism: A Salute to Enzo Paci," in *Phenomenological Sociology*, G. Psathas, ed. (New York: Wiley, 1973); and J. O'Neill, *Sociology as a Skin Trade* (New York: Harper and Row, 1972). For the work of British sociologists of education see *Knowledge and Control: New Directions for the Sociology of*

Education, M. F. D. Young, ed. (London: Collier-Macmillan, 1971). For a Marxian analysis sympathetic to phenomenology, but also critical on many points, see M. Sarup, *Marxism and Education* (London: Routeledge and Kegan Paul, 1978). A recent article applying ideas from both views to organizational analysis is R. H. Brown, "Bureaucracy as Praxis: Toward a Political Phenomenology of Formal Organizations," *Administrative Science Quarterly* 23 (September 1978).

7. Willower, "Ideology and Science in Organization Theory."
8. For a concise application of the Marxist view to organizations, see J. K. Benson, "Organizations: A Dialectical View," *Administrative Science Quarterly* 22 (March 1977). See also selected papers in the collection edited by Benson, *Organizational Analysis: Critique and Innovation* (Beverley Hills: Sage, 1977); and Sarup, *Marxism and Education*.
9. On the decline of role theory in educational administration and sociology respectively, see D. E. Griffiths, "Administrative Theory," in *Encyclopedia of Educational Research*, R. L. Ebel, ed. (Toronto: Macmillan, 1969); and R. G. Corwin, "Models of Educational Organizations," in *Review of Research in Education, Vol. 2*, F. N. Kerlinger and J. B. Carroll, eds. (Itasca, Ill.: F. E. Peacock, 1974). Examination of recent issues of the dissertation abstracts, *Educational Administration Quarterly*, and *Journal of Educational Administration* also shows very little work based on role theory. For a review of leadership theories, see V. H. Vroom, "Leadership," in *Handbook of Industrial and Organizational Psychology*, M. D. Dunnette, ed. (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1976).
10. On the application of components, see K. F. Punch, "Bureaucratic Structure in Schools: Towards Redefinition and Measurement," *Educational Administration Quarterly* 5 (Spring 1969). One of the few major studies of bureaucracy in schools is J. G. Anderson, *Bureaucracy in Education* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1968).
11. An exception is S. Beer, *Brain of the Firm* (New York: Herder and Herder, 1972). In educational administration, see D. E. Griffiths, "Administrative Theory and Change in Organizations," in *Innovation in Education*, M. B. Miles, ed. (New York: Teachers College, Columbia University, 1964); and B. Clemson, "Beyond Management Information Systems," *Educational Administration Quarterly* 14 (Fall 1978).
12. W. Waller, *The Sociology of Teaching* (New York: Wiley, 1932).
13. Willower, "Some Issues in Research on School Organizations."
14. Two general sources on exchange theory are G. C. Homans, *Social Behavior: Its Elementary Forms* (New York: Harcourt, 1961); and P. M. Blau, *Exchange and Power in Social Life* (New York: Wiley, 1964). See also D. R. Pierce, *Exchange Patterns of the Educational Administration Professorship* (Columbus: University Council for Educational Administration, 1966). On conflict theory, see R. Collins, *Conflict Sociology* (New York: Academic Press, 1975).
15. E. M. Hanson and M. E. Brown, "A Contingency View of Problem Solving in Schools: A Case Analysis," *Educational Administration Quarterly* 13 (Spring 1977); and E. M. Hanson, "Organizational Control in Educational Systems" (Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Toronto, 1978).

16. R. Dewar and J. Werbel, "Universalistic and Contingency Predictions of Employee Satisfaction and Conflict," *Administrative Science Quarterly* 24 (September 1979).

17. J. W. Getzels and E. G. Guba, "Social Behavior and the Administrative Process," *School Review* 65 (Winter 1957); for an empirical test of the propositions, see E. G. Guba and C. E. Bidwell, *Administrative Relationships* (Chicago: Midwest Administration Center, University of Chicago, 1957).

18. On the garbage can model, see M. D. Cohen, J. G. March and J. P. Olsen, "A Garbage Can Model of Organizational Choice," *Administrative Science Quarterly* 17 (March 1972); M. D. Cohen and J. G. March, *Leadership and Ambiguity: The American College President* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1974); and J. G. March and J. P. Olsen, *Ambiguity and Choice in Organizations* (Bergen-Oslo-Tromso, Norway: Universitets forlaget, 1976). On loose coupling, see K. E. Weick, "Educational Organizations as Loosely Coupled Systems," *Administrative Science Quarterly* 21 (March 1976).

19. See, for example, March and Olsen, *Ambiguity and Choice;* and S. Abramowitz and E. Tenenbaum, *High School 77* (Washington: National Institute of Education, 1978).

20. Willower, "Ideology and Science in Organization Theory."

21. *Ibid.*

22. On uncertainty reduction and norms of rationality, see J. D. Thompson, *Organizations in Action* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1967). On the latter concept, see J. W. Meyer and B. Rowan, "Institutionalized Organizations: Formal Structure as Myth and Ceremony," *American Journal of Sociology* 83 (September 1977).

23. C. E. Bidwell, "The School as a Formal Organization," in *Handbook of Organizations,* J. G. March, ed. (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1965); D. C. Lortie, "The Balance of Control and Automomy in Elementary School Teaching," in *The Semi-Professions and Their Organization,* A. Etzioni, ed. (New York: Free Press, 1969); H. D. Guthrie and D. J. Willower, "The Ceremonial Congratulation: An Analysis of Principals' Observation Reports of Classroom Teaching," *High School Journal* 61 (February 1973).

24. Abramowitz and Tenenbaum, *High School '77.*

25. I have not mentioned Mintzberg's work because it has been primarily a technique for gathering information on what administrators do. However, it represents a promising vehicle for the development of theoretical ideas. This method, like field methods, can lead to the generation of concepts and hypotheses. See H. Mintzberg, *The Nature of Managerial Work* (New York: Harper, 1973). For studies of the school superintendency and high school principalship using this approach, see N. J. Pitner, "So Go the Days of Their Lives: A Descriptive Study of the Superintendency" (Paper presented at the Convention of the American Association of School Administrators, New Orleans, 1971); and W. J. Martin, "The Managerial Behavior of High School Principals" (Doctoral dissertation, The Pennsylvania State University, 1980).

26. On the philosophy, see E. Husserl, *Ideas: General Introduction to Pure Phenomenology,* trans. W. R. B. Gibson (New York: Macmillan, 1931) and *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology: An*

Introduction to Phenomenological Philosophy, trans. D. Carr (Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University Press, 1970); M. Farber, *The Foundation of Phenomenology* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1943). My comments are in "Ideology and Science in Organization Theory."

27. Social science applications of phenomenological ideas can be found in *Behaviorism and Phenomenology*, T. N. Wann, ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1964); *Phenomenological Sociology*, G. Psathas, ed. (New York: Wiley, 1973); and in sources cited in these works. On organizations, see R. Jehenson, "A Phenomenological Approach to the Study of Formal Organizations," in *ibid.*; and articles over the past several years in *Administrative Science Quarterly* of which Brown, "Bureaucracy as Praxis" is only one example. In educational administration, see T. B. Greenfield's, "Reflections on Organization Theory and the Truths of Irreconcilable Realities," *Educational Administration Quarterly* 14 (Spring 1978) and "Organization Theory as Ideology," *Curriculum Inquiry* 9 (Summer 1979). Greenfield cites the earlier relevant papers in educational administration in these two articles.

28. Because T. B. Greenfield raised it early, the phenomenological perspective became a major issue in educational administration somewhat before it did in organization theory proper.

29. I have commented on my epistemological position in "Ideology and Science in Organization Theory." It takes knowledge to be the result of public procedures aimed at disproof, that is, as the product of inquiry. Hence, knowledge is always provisional, never certain or final.

30. M. Farber, "Experience and Subjectivism," in *Philosophy for the Future*, R. W. Sellars, V. J. McGill and M. Farber, eds. (New York: Macmillan, 1949).

31. M. Polanyi, *Personal Knowledge* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1958).

32. Technically, an idealist position that saw scientific methods as appropriate to gain knowledge of appearances but not of "higher realities" could be included among epistemologies not inconsistent with science. Such a position presents special problems, but in any case it does not appear to be relevant to the present discussion. For a non-positivistic epistemology compatible with science, see J. Dewey, *Logic, the Theory of Inquiry* (New York: Henry Holt, 1938).

33. I used the term physical science instead of natural science since, as Dewey has commented, the social sciences are natural sciences in the broad sense of natural. See *ibid.*, p. 487.

34. See, for example, Greenfield, "Organization Theory as Ideology."

35. C. Geertz, *The Interpretation of Culture* (New York: Basic Books, 1973).

36. Although philosophically confused in some respects, and not explicitly phenomenological, most of the broader criticisms of positivistic science made by phenomenologically oriented writers on organizations can be found in G. L. Susman and R. D. Evered, "An Assessment of the Scientific Merits of Action Research," *Administrative Science Quarterly* 23 (December 1978). For a less broad critique, see T. B. Greenfield, "Ideas versus Data: How Can the Data Speak for Themselves," in Immegart and Boyd, *Problem Finding*.

37. A simple statement is H. Feigl, "Logical Empiricism," in *Twentieth Century Philosophy*, D. D. Runes, ed. (New York: Philosophical Library, 1947); and a more complex one is found in *Readings in Philosophical Analysis*, H. Feigl

and W. Sellars, eds. (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1949). For a critical analysis, see M. Cornforth, "Logical Empiricism," in Sellars, McGill, and Farber, *Philosophy for the Future*.

38. H. Feigl, "Operationism and Scientific Method," in Feigl and Sellars, *Readings in Philosophical Analysis*, p. 504.

39. Cornforth, "Logical Empiricism," is critical of the failure of logical empiricists to take a realist, or from his perspective, materialist, position on this issue. On the other hand, Feigl is an example of the logical empiricists who argue, on the basis of current knowledge, that "the scope of the natural universe is tremendously wider than the human experience on the basis of which it is known . . . . " (Feigl, "Logical Empiricism," p. 391). This form of "empirical realism" posits an independent world, but on scientific not metaphysical grounds.

40. Charles Dickens, *Hard Times* (New York: Harper Classics, 1958), p. 4. First published in 1854.

41. See my "Schools, Values and Educational Inquiry," *Educational Administration Quarterly* 9 (Spring 1973).

42. D. E. Griffiths, *Administrative Theory* (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1959), p. 35.

43. See D. J. Willower and R. G. Jones, "Control in an Educational Organization," in *Studying Teaching*, J. Raths and others, eds. (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1967); and my "The Professorship in Educational Administration: A Rationale," in *The Professorship in Educational Administration*, D. J. Willower and J. A. Culbertson, eds. (Columbus and University Park: University Council for Educational Administration and The Pennsylvania State University, 1964).

44. I argued for the use of experience audits, logs, and diaries in "Theory in Educational Administration." W. G. Monahan, when at the University of Iowa, directed research using photography as a major medium. R. E. Jennings at the State University of New York at Buffalo and others have used novels extensively as teaching devices, but I have not seen anything explicitly using novels to generate hypotheses, although it has probably happened many times.

45. Thick description, the term Geertz borrowed from Gilbert Ryle, has been heralded as if it were a cure-all by a few in educational administration who apparently have not carefully examined what the notion entails. Actually, its main application is to unfamiliar cultures. It has much more limited application in intra-cultural studies, as of school organizations. See Gertz, *The Interpretation of Culture*, Chapter One.

46. The Brancusi sculpture is titled "Torment." D. H. Lawrence, *The Rainbow* (New York: Viking, 1961). First published in 1915.

47. An obvious parallel is to *verstehen* as used by Max Weber, but Weber considered this empathic method to be of only secondary significance. See D. Martindale, *The Nature and Types of Sociological Theory* (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, 1960), pp. 385-388.

48. System is a concept of many uses. One can speak of general systems, social systems, and subsystems among others, and the term can be applied to units at different levels like school districts, school buildings, and classrooms, as well

as to organizations generally. Greenfield is a good example of one who makes the reification argument, largely in connection with organizations. See any of his previously cited papers.

49. A. W. Gouldner, *The Coming Crisis of Western Sociology* (New York: Basic Books, 1970), p. 213.

50. R. K. Merton, *Social Theory and Social Structure* (New York: Free Press, 1956), p. 106. Merton also refutes the argument that functional analysis is essentially conservative. See especially pp. 91-92.

51. Thompson, *Organizations in Action.*

52. Greenfield, "Organization Theory as Ideology."

53. Organizational studies in the social-psychological tradition have focused on individual attitudes and beliefs for years. However, organizational influences are better tapped by investigations of the relationship of belief and behavior, one reason why we have examined both in our inquiries on the place of pupil control in school organizations. For an example, see R. S. Blust and D. J. Willower, "Organizational Pressure, Personal Ideology and Teacher Pupil Control Behavior," *Journal of Educational Administration* 17 (May 1979).

54. Values are defined as conceptions of the desirable in C. Kluckholn and others, "Values and Value Orientations in the Theory of Action," in *Toward a General Theory of Action*, T. Parsons and E. A. Shils, eds. (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1951), p. 395.

55. In "Ideology and Science in Organization Theory," I argued that phenomenological social science fits the following broad ideological pattern: experience is favored over reason, concreteness over abstraction, change over stability, diversity over unity, idiographic over nomothetic science, and social activism over passivism. Another dichotomy, man as essentially rational or irrational, presented a problem because phenomenological social scientists reject approaches that stress rationality but have a major difficulty with irrationality, as do all subjectivists.

56. See, for example, the work of some of the British sociologists of education cited in footnote 6.

57. Greenfield, "Organizational Theory as Ideology," p. 107.

58. See Susman and Evered, "An Assessment," whose emphasis on action research recalls the popularity of that idea some years ago in education as exemplified in S. M. Corey, *Action Research To Improve School Practices* (New York: Teachers College, Columbia University, 1953). The notion of practice is developed in broad but sometimes confused terms in W. H. Schubert, "Recalibrating Educational Research: Toward a Focus on Practice," *Educational Researcher* 9 (January 1980).

59. Greenfield, "Reflections on Organization Theory and the Truths of Irreconcilable Realities," p. 20.

60. Waller, *Sociology of Teaching;* A. B. Hollingshead, *Elmtown's Youth* (New York: Wiley, 1949); H. F. Wolcott, *The Man in the Principal's Office* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1973).

61. D. J. Willower and H. W. Fraser, "School Superintendents on Their Work," *Administrator's Notebook* 28 (January 1980).

62. Merton, *Social Theory and Social Structure.*

63. *Administrative Science Quarterly* 24 (December 1979).

64. T. S. Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970).

65. H. Mintzberg, "Mintzberg's Final Paradigm," *Administrative Science Quarterly* 23 (December 1978).

66. G. Morgan, "Response to Mintzberg," *Administrative Science Quarterly* 24 (March 1979).

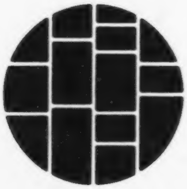
67. Farber, "Experience and Subjectivism," p. 619.

68. One need not start out as a realist to accept the plausibility of a world independent of perceptions of it. Cumulative observations in the physical sciences quite strongly support such a hypothesis.

69. J. M. Burns and J. W. Peltson, *Government by the People* (New York: Prentice-Hall, 1952), p. 47.

Source: D.J. Willower, 'Contemporary issues in theory in educational administration', *Educational Administration Quarterly*, vol. 16, no. 3, 1980, pp. 1–25

Annotated bibliography



Bates, R.J., 'Educational administration, the sociology of science, and the management of knowledge', *Educational Administration Quarterly*, vol. 16, no. 2, 1980, pp. 1–20.
A very cogently argued article in which Bates addresses current issues in the 'new sociology of education', linking key questions related to knowledge to the contemporary malaise in educational administration. Administrators are seen as occupying critical mediating points in a control structure which manages and transmits school knowledge.

Deblois, C., 'Challenge to administrative theory', *Canadian Administrator*, vol. 18, no. 8, 1979, pp. 1–4.
A short, but useful introduction to traditional and more recent approaches taken in educational administration. A succinct summary of the assumptions underlying both positivist and subjectivist paradigms.

Greenfield, T.B., 'Organizations as social inventions: rethinking assumptions about change', *Journal of Applied Behavioral Science*, vol. 9, no. 5, 1973, pp. 551–74.
Greenfield's first article on 'structures' and the taken-for-granted universality of organisation theory. A carefully argued and searching critique in which it is suggested that scholars ought to be less concerned with changing organisations and more concerned with 'just what it is we change'.

Greenfield, T.B., 'Reflections on organizational theory and the truths of irreconcilable realities', *Educational Administration Quarterly*, vol. 14, no. 2, 1979, pp. 1–23.
Greenfield's first summary of events after Bristol, for a largely American audience. His first attempt to reply to Griffiths, Willower and his other critics. An elaboration of the idea of organisations as 'invented social reality' runs throughout the paper.

Greenfield, T.B., 'Ideas versus data: how can the data speak for themselves?', in G.L. Immegart and W.L. Boyd (eds), *Problem-Finding in Educational Administration: Trends in Research and Theory*, Lexington Books, Lexington, Mass., 1979, pp. 167–90.
If organisations are a variety of invented social reality, how can research into them best proceed? The paper explores this question and suggests a rationale for subjectivist inquiry into organisations. Set against other papers in the Immegart and Boyd book, which have strong empiricist and positivist biases, this paper shows how strongly different theoretical assumptions about organisations shape inquiry into them.

Greenfield, T.B., 'Research in educational administration in the United States and Canada: an overview and critique', *Educational Administration*, vol. 8, no. 1, 1979-80, pp. 207–45.
A summary and critique of a generation of theory and research in educational administration. It suggests why the 'new movement' failed.

Greenfield, T.B., 'Against group mind: an anarchistic theory of education', *McGill Journal of Education*, vol. 17, no. 1, 1982, pp. 3–11.

Greenfield's most recent published work. It expresses a disdain for the arbitrary nature of the logic which undergirds social order and which informs social science discourse. Greenfield ends by proposing that 'while we ourselves are bound [by such logic], we may yet free our minds'.

Griffiths, D.E., 'The individual in organization: a theoretical perspective', *Educational Administration Quarterly*, vol. 13, no. 2, 1977, pp. 1–18.
Griffiths re-examines his own doubts about systems thinking, following Greenfield's 1974 critique. While using the word 'individual' in the title, and thereby acknowledging the way educational administration has previously reified organisation, Griffiths still asserts the need for a theory of organisation and the verification of hypotheses in research.

Griffiths, D.E., 'Contemporary theory development and educational administration', *Educational Administration*, vol. 6, no. 4, 1978, pp. 80–93.
An article directed to a substantially British audience. Griffiths persists with his own already progressive abandonment of much that he once took for granted in educational administration: He is particularly critical of 'role' analysis and 'great man' theories.

Griffiths, D.E., 'Another look at research on the behavior of administrators', in G.L. Immegart and W.L. Boyd (eds), *Problem-Finding in Educational Administration: Trends in Research and Theory*, Lexington Books, Lexington, Mass., 1979, pp. 41–62.
A highly personal, but instructive perspective on the current problems which beset educational administrators and educational administration. Griffiths draws extensively on his own experience as a university dean and argues for research into administrative practice, suggesting administration is an art.

Hodgkinson, C., 'The failure of organizational and administrative theory', *McGill Journal of Education*, vol. 13, no. 3, 1978, pp. 271–8.
A short, succinct and cogent statement about the poverty of theory, particularly administrative theory which Hodgkinson describes as 'honorific' not 'scientific'. Hodgkinson is sympathetic to phenomenological explanations or organisations and endorses a broad range of qualitative methods of investigation.

Hodgkinson, C., *Towards a Philosophy of Administration*, Basil Blackwell, Oxford, 1978.
Sir Geoffrey Vickers called this 'a very important book'. Hodgkinson's thorough, penetrating and scholarly argument is about the centrality of values in administration. He says: '. . . no science, social or physical, can tell us what is right or wrong. Administrators need a technique for resolving value conflicts which is superior to the methods of avoidance, least resistance or lowest principle. To gain such a technique they must do some philosophy'.

Morgan, G., 'Paradigms, metaphors and puzzle-solving in organisation theory', *Administrative Science Quarterly*, vol. 25, no. 4, 1980, pp. 605–22.

Written from a radical humanist stance, this article provides a highly instructive and up-to-date scheme for categorising the assumptions and interests informing organisational theories and analyses. It complements Morgan's earlier and more extensive work with G. Burrell in *Sociological Paradigms and Organisational Analysis*.

Willower, D.J., 'Ideology and science in organisation theory', *Educational Administration Quarterly*, vol. 15, no. 3, 1979, pp. 20–42.
The argument here is that 'science' and theory are the best means of seeking truth. Willower links phenomenology and Marxist analyses of organisations and social reality dismissing each as 'essentially a body of dogma reinforced by its place as part of a political movement and given to polemical expression'.

Willower, D.J., 'Educational administration: some philosophical and other considerations', *Journal of Educational Administration*, vol. 19, no. 1, 1981, pp. 115–39.
A further re-statement by Willower of traditional science-based approaches to educational administration. Whilst finding the debate in the field 'vibrant and exciting' he criticises what he sees as the lack of epistemological rigour amongst a broad range of critics of organisational theory and educational administration. At the same time he endorses Griffiths' call for research into the practice of administration.

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